Virtues of the HOLY QUR'AAN

Revised translation of
the Urdu book *Faza'il-e-Qur'aan*

Virtues of the Holy Qur'aan



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In the name of Allah, the Most Benevolent, the Most Merciful

FOREWORD

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ وَعَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ وَاَنْزَلَ لَهُ الْقُرْآنَ وَجَعَلَهُ مَوْعِظَةً وَّشِفَاءً وَّهُدًى وَّرَحْمَةً لِّذَوِى الْاِيْمَانِ لَارَيْبَ فِيْهِ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَّهُ عِوَجًا وَاَنْزَلَهُ قَيِّمًا حُجَّةً نُوْرًا لِذَوِى الْاِيْقَانِ وَالصَّلٰوةُ وَالسَّلَامُ الْاَتَمَّانِ الْاَكْمَلَانِ عَلٰى خَيْرِ الْخَلَائِقِ مِنَ الْاِنْسِ وَالْجَانِّ الَّذِىْ نَوَّرَ الْقَلْبَ وَالْقُبُوْرَ نُوْرُهُ وَ رَحْمَةٌ لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ظُهُوْرُهُ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَصَحْبِهِ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ نُجُوْمُ الْهِدَايَةِ وَنَاشِرُ الْفُرْقَانِ وَعَلٰى مَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ بِالْاِيْمَانِ وَبَعْدُ فَيَقُوْلُ الْمُفْتَقِرُ اِلٰى رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ الْجَلِيْلِ عَبْدُهُ الْمَدْعُوُّ بِزَكَرِيَّا بْنِ يَحْيٰى بْنِ اِسْمٰعِيْلَ هٰذِهِ الْعُجَالَةُ اَرْبَعُوْنَةٌ فِىْ فَضَائِلِ الْقُرْآنِ اَلَّفْتُهَا مُمْتَثِلًا لِاَمْرِ مَنْ اِشَارَتُهُ حُكْمٌ وَطَاعَتُهُ غُنْمٌ

All praise be to Allah Who created man, gave him the gift of expression and revealed for him the Holy Qur'an, which is a source of advice, healing guidance and mercy for those who have faith. The Qur'an contains nothing that is doubtful or crooked. It is absolutely straight, and authority and Nur (enlightenment) for the believers. Abundant and perfect salutation be on Muhammad Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) (blessing and peace from Allah be upon him), the person who is the best of all creation, whose Nur illuminated the hearts of the living and their graves after death, whose appearance was a bounty for the whole universe. Peace be upon his descendants and Companions, who are the stars of guidance and propagators of the Holy Qur'an, and also upon those believers who are their followers in faith.

After this praise and salutation, I (the author), Zakariyya, son of Yahya, son of Isma'il, state that these hurriedly written pages contain forty ahadith (Plural of hadith—a saying of the Holy Prophet (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam)), which I have compiled on virtues of the Holy Qur'an, in obedience to such people whose words are law for me and following whom is most valuable to me. One of the special favours of Allah, the Sanctified and Pure, which have always descended upon the higher Madrasah (religious school) of Mazahir-ul-Ulum, Saharanpur, has been the annual gathering of this Madrasah for the purpose of briefly mentioning the progress of the institution. For this gathering at the Madrasah, not much effort is made to collect speakers, preachers and the famous people of India, but more attention is paid to invite men whose hearts are full of love for Allah and Masha'ikh (saintly people) who prefer to live unknown. Although those days have receded in the past when 'Hujjat-ul-Islam' (a title meaning a great authority on Islam) Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanautvi Saheb (Rahmatullah alaih) and Qutbul Irshad (a title meaning a great savant) Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Ganghoi Saheb (Nawwarallahu marqadahu) used to honour this gathering with their presence and illuminate the hearts of all who attended, and the scene has not yet disappeared from the eyes when the spiritual descendants of those revivalists of Islam—Hadhrat Shaikh-ul-Hind (Rahmatullah alaih), Hadhrat Shah Abdur Rahim (Rahmatullah alaih), Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad Saheb (Rahmatullah alaih), and Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi Saheb (Nawwarallahu marqadahu) used to assemble at the annual gathering of the Madrasah. Their presence was a fountain source of life and light for deadened souls and quenched the thirst of those who sought Divine love.

At present, though the annual gatherings do not have the illuminations of even such sources of guidance, their true spiritual descendants still honour these gatherings with their presence and enrich the audience with bounties and blessings. The people who attended the gathering this year are witnesses to this. Only those who possess eyes that see can experience the effulgence, but sightless beings like us can also feel something unusual.

At the annual gathering of this Madrasah, if a person comes to listen to polished speeches and forceful lectures, he will perhaps not return so much happy as one who seeks a balm for his heart.

فَلِلّٰهِ الْحَمْدُ وَالْمِنَّةُ

All praise and supplication is for Allah.

In the same connection, during this year on 27th Zil-qa'dah (name of the eleventh month of Islamic calendar), 1348 Hijri, Hadhrat Shah Hafiz Mohammad Yasin Naginwi (Rahmatullah alaih) visited the Madrasah. His coming was like a shower of affection and kindness, and I cannot adequately thank him for this. After knowing about him that he is one of the spiritual heirs of Hadhrat Gangohi (Rahmatullah alaih), there is no need of mentioning his fine qualities of devotion and piety, and the presence of Anwaar (Plural of 'Nur'—enlightenment and blessings) in his own person. When this gathering was over, he returned home and honoured me with a kind letter asking me to compile forty ahadith regarding the virtues of the Glorious Quran and send them to him along with their translations. He also wrote to me that, if I did not carry out his wishes, he would ask the successor to my Shaikh (teacher) and elderly uncle, Maulana Hafiz Alhaj Maulvi Mohammad Ilyas (Rahmatullah alaih), to confirm this order of his. He made it certain that he wanted me to do this job. Incidentally, I received that honoured message when I was out travelling and my uncle was present (at Saharanpur). On my return, my uncle gave this letter to me along with his own firm orders for compliance. Now there was no occasion for me for any excuse or to plead lack of ability. Although my occupation with the commentary of 'Mo'atta' (a book of Ahadith) of Imam Malik (Rahmatullah alaih) was a good excuse, I had to postpone that work for a few days and, in compliance with the urgent orders, produce my effort for his esteemed consideration. I beg to be excused for such shortcomings as are inevitable because of my incompetence.

رَجَاءَ الْحَشْرِ فِيْ سِلْكِ مَنْ قَالَ فِيهِمُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ حَفِظَ عَلٰى أُمَّتِيْ اَرْبَعِيْنَ حَدِيْثًا فِيْ اَمْرِ دِيْنِهَا بَعَثَهُ اللّٰهُ فَقِيْهاً وَكُنْتُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ شَافِعًا وَّ شَهِيْدًا ، قَالَ الْعَلْقَمِيُّ اَلْحِفْظُ ضَبْطُ الشَّيْءِ وَمَنْعُهُ مِنَ الضَّيَاعِ فَتَارَةً يَّكُوْنُ حِفْظُ الْعِلْمِ بِالْقَلْبِ وَاِنْ لَّمْ يَكْتُبْ وَتَارَةً فِيْ الْكِتَابِ وَاِنْ لَّمْ يَحْفَظْهُ بِقَلْبِهٖ فَلَوْ حَفِظَ فِيْ كِتَابٍ ثُمَّ نَقَلَ اِلَى النَّاسِ دَخَلَ فِيْ وَعْدِ الْحَدِيْثِ وَقَالَ الْمُنَاوِيُّ قَوْلُهُ مَنْ حَفِظَ عَلٰى اُمَّتِيْ اَىْ نَقَلَ اِلَيْهِمْ بِطَرِيْقِ التَّخْرِيْجِ وَالْاِسْنَادِ وَقِيْلَ مَعْنٰى حِفْظِهَا

اَنْ يَّنْقُلَهَا اِلَى الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَاِنْ لَمْ يَحْفَظْهَا وَلَاعَرَفَ مَعْنَاهَا وَقَوْلُهُ اَرْبَعِيْنَ حَدِيْثًا صِحَاحًا اَوْ حِسَانًا قِيْلَ اَوْ ضِعَافًا يُعْمَلُ بِهَا فِيْ الْفَضَائِلِ اهـ فَلِلّٰهِ دَرُّ الْاِسْلَامِ مَااَيْسَرَهُ وَلِلّٰهِ دَرُّ اَهْلِهٖ مَااَجْوَدَ مَااسْتَنْبَطُوْا رَزَقَنِىَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى وَاِيَّاكُمْ كَمَالَ الْاِسْلَامِ وَمِمَّا لَابُدَّ مِنَ التَّنْبِيْهِ عَلَيْهِ اَنِّىْ اِعْتَمَدْتُّ فِى التَّخْرِيْجِ عَلَى الْمِشْكٰوةِ وَتَخْرِيْجِهٖ وَشَرْحِهِ الْمِرْقَاةِ وَشَرْحِ الْاِحْيَاءِ لِلسَّيِّدِ مُحَمَّدِنِ الْمُرْتَضٰى وَالتَّرْغِيْبِ لِلْمُنْذِرِيِّ وَمَا عَزَوْتُ اِلَيْهَا لِكَثْرَةِ الْاَخْذِ عَنْهَا وَمَا اَخَذْتُ عَنْ غَيْرِهَا عَزَوْتُهُ اِلٰى مَاْخِذِهٖ وَيَنْبَغِىْ لِلْقَارِىْ مُرَاعَاتُ اٰدَابِ التِّلَاوَةِ عِنْدَ الْقِرَائَةِ

I have done it in the hope of being raised together on the day of judgement together with such people as were referred by Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) when he said: "Whoever will preserve for my Ummah (followers of the Prophet) forty 'Ahadith' concerning important matters of their faith, Almighty Allah will raise him, on the Day of Judgement, as an Alim (religious scholar) and I will intercede on his behalf and stand witness in his favour."

Alqami (Rahmatullah alaih) says that the word 'preserve' occurring in this hadith is used in the sense of securing something and guarding it against loss by either committing it to memory without recording it or by recording in black and white, without even memorizing it. So any one writing them in the form of a book and passing them on to others will also be covered by the blessings mentioned in this 'hadith.'

Munaawi (Rahmatullah alaih) is of the opinion that "preserve for my Ummat" means reporting of a hadith along with its authority. According to some, "preserve" includes even those who are reporting it to other Muslims without memorizing it or even without knowing its meanings. Also the expression "forty ahadith" has been used in general sense, i.e., these ahadith may be all sahih (authentic), hasan (correct) or even da'if (weak) to the degree that can be acted upon because of their virtues.

Allaho akbar! (How great Allah is!). Many are the facilities provided in Islam. And commendable indeed has been the role of scholars and theologians who took such pains to explain the subtleties of various expressions. May Almighty Allah bless us all with perfection in Islam.

It is important to note that whenever I have quoted a hadith without mentioning the name of the book, it should be deemed to have been taken from one of the five books, viz., 'Al-Mishkat', 'Tanqih-ur-Ruwat', 'Al-Mirqat'. 'Sharah-ul-Ihya' and 'At-Targhib' of Mundhiri, on which I have relied and from which I have drawn extensively. Whenever I have quoted from any other book, the source has been mentioned.

It is incumbent upon the reader of the Qur'an to observe the rules of reverence for its recitation.

Before proceeding further, it seems desirable to mention first some of the requirements of decorum for reading of the Holy Qur'an; because, as admitted.

بے ادب محروم گشت از فضل رب

One who is devoid of reverence misses Allah's special favour.

In brief, the essence of all the rules of reverence is to consider the Glorious Qur'an as the words of Almighty Allah, Whom we worship, and as the Word of One Whom we love and seek.

Those who have ever experieced love, know how worthy of adoration is a letter or speech of the beloved. The ecstatic raptures caused by such a communication are beyond all rules of propriety because, as it is said.

محبت تجھ کو آداب محبت خود سکھا دے گی

Love itself will teach one the rules of conduct in love.

So, while reading the Qur'an, if we attempt to visualise the real beauty and limitless bounty of our Beloved Allah, our hearts will be swayed by emotions of heavenly love. At the same tine, the Qur'an is the Word of the Master of masters and the commands of the Emperor of all kings. It is the law promulgated by the All-powerful Monarch, Who remains unequalled for ever. Those who have served at the courts of kings know by experience, while others can just visualise the extreme awe inspired by the king's orders.

The Qur'an is the word of our Beloved Lord, Who is also the Supreme Monarch. We should, therefore read the Qur'an with the emotions of love and awe.

It is said that whenever Hadhrat 'Ikramah (Radhiyallaho anho) (may Allah be pleased with him) opened the Book for recitation, he became unconscious and fell down. Then he would utter,

هٰذَا كَلَامُ رَبِّىْ هٰذَا كَلَامُ رَبِّىْ

"This is the Word of my Allah, this is the Word of my Allah."

The aforesaid contains briefly the spirit of the requirements of decorum as written in great detail by the Muslim scholars. It will further be explained in the following paragraphs. In short, a Muslim should read the book of Allah not just as a servant, but as a slave in the spirit of complete humility towards his Lord, Master and Benefactor. The Sufia (Plural of Sufi–mystic) have written that, if a person feels his shortcomings in exercising due respect and reverence while reciting the Qur'an, he will continue to progress along the path of nearness to Almighty Allah but a person who regards himself with approval or pride will not advance further.

Rules of Reverence for reading the Holy Qur'an

After cleaning the teeth with a miswak (a green twig of special varieties of trees used for brushing the teeth) and wudhu (ablution), one should sit in a quite place with grace and humility and face towards Qiblah (direction towards the Ka'bah in Mecca). Then, with an attentive heart, deep devotion and zest befitting the occasion, one should recite, imagining all the time that he is reciting it to Almighty Allah. If one understands the meaning, one should pause and reflect on ayaat (Plural of 'ayat'–a verse of the Qur'an) of promise and mercy and should beg for His forgiveness and compassion. On ayaat of punishment and admonition, one should seek His refuge, as except Him there is no Helper. On ayaat pertaining to His Majesty and Sanctity, one should say "Subhaanallah" (Glory to Allah). If one does not spontaneously shed tears while reading the Book, one must induce oneself to weep a little.

وَاَلَذُّ حَالَاتِ الْغَرَامِ لِمُغْرَمٍ   شَكْوَى الْهَوَى بِالْمَدْمَعِ الْمُهْرَاقِ

For a lover, the moments of greatest pleasure are those when, in the presence of his beloved, he is full of self-reproach and shedding tears profusely.

One should not read fast unless one desires to memorize it. The Qu'ran should be placed in a slightly elevated position on a wooden stand or a pillow. One should not talk to others during recitation. If one is forced by necessity to speak to someone, it should be done after first closing the Book, and then recite 'Ta'awwudh' (seeking refuge of Allah against Satan), before reading again. If people nearby are occupied in their work, reading in a low voice is appreciated otherwise reading loudly is more rewarding.

The Masha'ikh have mentioned six external and six internal rules of reverence for reading the Holy Qu'ran, which are given below:

Rules of External Reverence

(1) Perform Wudhu and then sit facing Qiblah in an extremely dignified manner.

(2) Do not proceed fast, but read with measure and correct pronunciation.

(3) Try to weep, even if you have to compel yourself to do so.

(4) The response to ayaat of mercy or of punishment should be as explained above.

(5) Reading should be in a low voice, if insincerity is apprehended on your own part or disturbance is caused to others. Otherwise read in a loud voice.

(6) Read in a melodious voice, because there are numerous ahadith laying emphasis on this.

Rules of Internal Reverence

(1) The heart should be full of the glory of Qur'an i.e. realizing how sublime it is.

(2) Bear in the heart the Loftiness, Majesty and Magnificence of Almighty Allah, Whose Revelation the Qu'ran is.

(3) The heart should be free from distraction and doubts.

(4) Dwell upon the meanings and enjoy reading it.

Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) once spent the whole night reading over and over again the following ayat:

اِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَاِنْ تَغْفِرْلَهُمْ فَاِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ .

If Thou should chastise them, they are Thy servants, and if Thou should forgive them, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise (V: 118).

Once, Hadhrat Sa'eed ibn Jubair (Radhiyallaho anho) spent the whole night repeating the following ayat:

وَامْتَازُوْا الْيَوْمَ اَيُّهَا الْمُجْرِمُوْنَ

And withdraw aside today, O guilty ones! (XXXVI: 59).

(5) Submit your heart to the subject-matter of the verses you are reading. For instance, on ayaat containing a message of mercy, the heart should be filled with delight. And on ayaat of chastisement, the heart should tremble with awe.

(6) The ears should be made as attentive as if Almighty Allah Himself is speaking and the reader is listening to Him.

May Allah, out of His mercy and kindness, grant all of us the ability to read the Qu'ran according to these rules of reverence.

A Religious Principle

The memorizing of that much of the Glorious Qu'ran as is necessary for the offering of salaat is obligatory for every Muslim, whereas memorizing the whole of the Holy Qur'an is Fard Kifayah, i.e. an act obligatory on all, but which may suffice if performed by an adequate number. If there were not a single hafiz (may Allah forbid) all the Muslims would be held responsible for this sin. Mulla'Ali Qari (Rahmatullah alaih) has further reported from Zarkashi (Rahmatullah alaih) that if, in a town or a village, there were no person to read the Holy Qur'an, all the Muslim inhabitants of that place would be considered sinful. In this

age of darkness and ignorance when the Muslims have become misguided in respect of many aspects of Islam, it is generally considered useless and stupid to memorize the Qur'an and a sheer waste of time and mental energy to repeat its words without understanding their meaning. If this were the only case of our aversion to faith, something in detail could be written about it. But today all our acts are erring and all our thoughts are leading us astray. For how many should one wail and about how many should one complain.

فَإِلَى اللهِ الْمُشْتَكىٰ وَاللهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ

So to Allah do we complain and from Him do we seek help.

PART I

FORTY AHADITH

Hadith–1

(١) عَنْ عُثْمَانَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ خَيْرُكُمْ مَّنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ (رواه البخارى وأبو داود والترمذى والنسائى وابن ماجه هذا فى الترغيب وعزاه إلى مسلم أيضاً لكن حكى الحافظ فى الفتح عن أبى العلاء انّ مسلماً سكت عنه)

Hadhrat Uthman (Radhiyallaho anha) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said: "The best amongst you is he who learns the Qur'an and teaches it." In most of the books, this hadith is quoted with the word 'and' between 'learns' and 'teaches' as above. Thus the greatest reward would be for him who learns the Holy Qur'an and thereafter teaches it to others. But in some of the books this 'hadith's is narrated with the word 'or', in which case the meaning would be: "The best amongst you is he who learns the Qur'an or teaches it."

According to this version, the reward is general, i.e., equally great whether one learns himself or teaches to others. Thus there would be equal virtue for both.

The Qur'an is the basis of the religion of Islam, and on the preservation and propagation of the Qur'an depends the very existence of this faith. Hence the virtue of learning and teaching the Qur'an is self-evident and does not need further elucidation.

There are, however, various degrees of excellence. The highest is to learn the Qur'an along with its meanings and purport, and the least is to learn its words only.

The hadith mentioned above is supported also by another saying of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) as reported by Hadhrat Sa'eed ibn Saleem (Radhiyallaho anho): "If a person who has acquired knowledge of the Holy Qur'an considers another person who has been gifted with something else to be more fortunate than himself, he has shown disrespect to the blessings of Allah bestowed on

him on account of his learning the Qur'an." It is evident that since the Qur'an, being the Word of Allah, is superior to all other discourses as mentioned in some of the ahadith quoted later, its reading and teaching must be superior to everything else.

Mulla Ali Qari quotes from another hadith that whoever acquires the knowledge of Holy Qur'an stores the knowledge of prophethood in his forehead.

Sahl Tastari (Rahmatullah alaih) says that the proof of love for Allah is the existence of love for the Word of Allah in one's heart.

In 'Sharhul Ihya', the list of people who will be given shelter in the shade of the Arsh (Throne of Allah) on the fearful Day of Judgement includes those persons who teach the Qur'an to the children of Muslims and also those who learn the Holy Qur'an in their childhood and are devoted to its recitation when grown up.

HADITH–2

(٢) عَنْ اَبِىْ سَعِيْدٍ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ يَقُوْلُ الرَّبُّ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالٰى مَنْ شَغَلَهُ الْقُرْآنُ عَنْ ذِكْرِىْ وَمَسْئَلَتِىْ اَعْطَيْتُهُ اَفْضَلَ مَا أُعْطِىْ السَّائِلِيْنَ وَفَضْلُ كَلَامِ اللّٰهِ عَلٰى سَائِرِ الْكَلَامِ كَفَضْلِ اللّٰهِ عَلٰى خَلْقِهِ (رواه الترمذى والدارمى والبيهقى فى الشعب)

Hadhrat Abu Sa'eed (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said: "Almighty Allah says; "If anybody finds no time for My remembrance and for begging favours of Me, because of his remaining busy with the Holy Qur'an, I shall give him more than what I give to all those who beg favours of Me. The superiority of the Word of Allah over all other words is like the superiority of Allah over the entire creation.

In other words, compared to those who are begging favours of Allah, He will surely confer some better reward on a person who remains so occupied with committing the Qur'an to memory or learning and understanding it that he hardly gets time for du'a (prayer).

It is commonly known that when a man distributes sweets, or something else amongst others, a share is set

aside for the person who cannot attend the function because of the task of distribution given to him by the distributor himself. In another hadith, in the same context, it is mentioned that Allah would give such a person a better reward than what He would give to His ever grateful servants.

HADITH–3

(٣) عَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ خَرَجَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ وَنَحْنُ فِىْ الصُّفَّةِ فَقَالَ اَيُّكُمْ اَنْ يَّغْدُوَ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ اِلٰى بُطْحَانَ اَوِ الْعَقِيْقِ فَيَأْتِىْ بِنَاقَتَيْنِ كَوْمَاوَيْنِ فِىْ غَيْرِ اِثْمٍ وَلَاقَطِيْعَةِ رَحْمٍ فَقُلْنَا يَارَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ كُلُّنَا نُحِبُّ ذٰلِكَ قَالَ اَفَلَا يَغْدُوْ اَحَدُكُمْ اِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ فَيَعْلَمُ اَوْ يَقْرَأُ اٰيَتَيْنِ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللّٰهِ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ مِنْ نَاقَتَيْنِ وَثَلٰثٌ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ مِنْ ثَلٰثٍ وَاَرْبَعٌ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ مِنْ اَرْبَعٍ وَمِنْ اَعْدَادِهِنَّ مِنَ الْاِبِلِ

(رواه مسلم وأبوداود)

Hadhrat 'Uqbah ibn Aamir (Radhiyallaho anho) has said: "Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) came to us while we were sitting on the Suffah and asked if any one of us would like to go to the market of But-haan or Aqeeq and fetch from there two she-camels of the finest breed without commiting any sin or severing a tie of kinship. We replied that everyone of us would love to do so. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) then said that going to the musjid and reciting or teaching two ayaat of the Qur'an is more precious than two she-camels, three ayaat are most precious than three she-camels, and that similarly reciting or teaching of four ayaat is better than four she-camels and an equal number of camels."

"Suffah" is the name of a particular raised platform in the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) in Medina. It used to be occupied by the poor Muslim muhajirin (Plural of muhajir-emigrant from Mecca to Medina) who are known as "Ashab-us-Suffah" (Men of Suffah). The number of these men varied from time to time: 'Allamah Suyuti (Rahmatullah alaih) has listed one hundred and one names and also written an independent booklet about their names.

But-han and Aqeeq were the two market-places for camels near Medina. The camel, more particularly a she-camel having a fat hump, was a favourite of the Arabs.

The expression "without sin" is significant. A thing can be acquired without labour either by extortion, through illegal inheritance (by forcefully taking over the property of some relative) or by theft. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) thus ruled out all such acquisitions. Acquiring a thing without any sin is certainly preferred by all, but much more valuable is the learning of a few ayaat.

It is a clear fact that let alone one or two camels, even if one acquires the kingdom of all the seven continents one will be forced to leave it, if not today surely tomorrow (at the time of death), but the reward of one ayat will be everlasting. We see even in this life that a man feels happier when he is given only one rupee (without the condition of returning it), rather than if he is given one thousand rupees for keeping in his safe custody for a while only. In the latter case, he is merely burdened with a trust without getting any benefit out of it. In fact, this hadith implies an admonition not to compare something temporary with something eternal. Whether in action or at rest, a man should consider if his efforts are being wasted on acquiring the temporary gains of this world, or, are directed towards achieving the everlasting ones. Woe be to the waste of effort for which we earn eternal misery. The last phrase of the hadith "superior to an equal number of camels" contains three meanings. First, upto the number four, the reward has been mentioned in detail. Beyond this, it is briefly mentioned that the more ayaat a person acquires, the greater will be their superiority over the number of camels. In this case, the word "camels" at the end refers to the species—either he-camels or she-camels—and the number implied is more than four because, upto the number four, the reward has been mentioned in detail. The second meaning is that the numbers mentioned are the same as referred to earlier, the significance being that inclinations are always different; some are fond of she-camels, others prefer a he-camel. Therefore Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has used this expression to signify that every ayat is superior to a she-camel, and if one prefers a he-camel, an ayat is also superior to a he-camel. The third meaning is that the numbers mentioned are the same as referred to before and not more than four. According to the

second meaning, the explanation that an ayat is superior to a she-camel or he-camel does not hold good, but it implies a collection, i.e., one ayat is superior to a he-camel and a she-camel considered together, and likewise every ayat is superior to the combination of an equal number of he-camels or she-camels. Thus a single ayat has been compared to a pair or couple (of camels). My late father (May Allah bless his grave with Divine light) has preferred the latter interpretation because it points to a superior virtue. This however, does not mean that the reward of an ayat can be equalled to a camel or two camels. All this is for inducement and illustration. It has been clearly written before that an ayat whose reward is permanent and enduring is superior and preferable even to a kingdom over the seven continents, which is bound to disintegrate.

Mulla 'Ali Qari has written an account of a pious Shaikh who went to Mecca for Hajj on the 9th day of Dhul Hijjah—the 12th month of the Islamic calendar. When he landed at Jiddah, some of his friends in business requested him to prolong his stay in Jiddah, so that they could earn more profit for their merchandise by virtue of his blessed presence. In fact they wanted that some of the servants of the Shaikh be benefited by the profits of their business. At first the Shaikh expressed his inability to prolong his stay, but when they insisted the Shaikh asked them as to the maximum profit that they would earn for their goods. They explained that the profit was not the same in all cases; but the maximum that they could expect was hundred per cent. The Shaikh said, "You have taken all this trouble for such a petty gain; for such an insignificant gain, I cannot miss the salaat in the respected Haram (the most Sacred Mosque), where the reward of salaat gets multiplied one hundred thousand times." In fact, we Muslims should consider how, for petty worldly gains, we sometimes sacrifice great spiritual benefits.

HADITH—4

(٤) عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَنْهَا قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ اَلْمَاهِرُ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَعَ السَّفَرَةِ الْكِرَامِ الْبَرَرَةِ وَالَّذِىْ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ وَيَتَتَعْتَعُ فِيْهِ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ شَاقٌّ لَهُ اَجْرَانِ (رواه البخارى ومسلم وأبوداود والترمذى والنسائى وابن ماجه)

Hadhrat 'Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaho anha) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) once said, "One who is well versed in the Qur'an will be in the company of those angels who are scribes, noble and righteous; and one who falters in reading the Qur'an, and has to exert hard for learning, gets double the reward."

"One who is well versed in the Qur'an" means one who is proficient in memorizing as well as in reciting it. It is highly praiseworthy if one masters its meaning and significance as well. "To be with the angels" means that, like the angels who transferred the Qur'an from the Lowhul Mahfooz' (Protected Tablet in the Heavens), he also conveys it to others through its recitation and, therefore, both have the same occupation; or that he will join the company of such angels on the Day of Judgement. One who falters will get double reward–one for his reading and the other for his effort in reading the Qur'an, in spite of faltering again and again. It does not mean that his reward will exceed that of a well-versed person. The reward that is mentioned for a well-versed person is far greater, so much so that he will be in the company of special angels. The explanation is that the labour involved in faltering and the difficulties in the reading of the Qur'an carry an independent reward. As such, reading of the Qur'an should not be given up, even though faltering may be an excuse.

Mulla 'Ali Qari has reproduced from the riwayat of Tabrani and Baihaqi that one who cannot memorize the Qur'an well and yet persists in learning it by heart gets double reward. Similarly, one who cherishes a longing for memorizing it and does not possess the ability to do so, but does not give up his efforts, will be reckoned by Almighty Allah among the huffaaz (Plural of hafiz–one who has learnt the whole Qur'an by heart) on the Day of Resurrection.

HADITH–5

(٥) عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا قال قال رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ لاحَسَدَ اِلَّا علىٰ اثْنَيْنِ رَجُلٌ اٰتَاهُ اللهُ الْقُرْآنَ فهُوَ يَقُوْمُ بِهِ اٰناَءَ اللَّيْلِ وَاٰنآَءَ النَّهَارِ وَرَجُلٌ اٰتَاهُ اللهُ مَالًا فهُوَ يُنْفِقُ مِنْهُ اٰناَءَ اللَّيْلِ وَاٰنآَءَ النَّهَارِ (رواه البخارى والترمذى والنسائى)

Hadhrat Ibn Umar (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Hasad (jealousy) is not permitted except in respect of two persons–one whom Allah blesses with recitation of Qur'an and he remains engaged in it day and night, and the other who is given a lot of wealth by Allah and he spends it day and night."

On the authority of many ayaat of the Qur'an and numerous ahadith, hasad is an evil and is absolutely forbidden. This hadith, however, appears to permit hasad in respect of two persons. Because there are many well-known traditions dealing with hasad, the Ulama (Plural of aalim–religious scholar) have interpreted this hadith in two ways. Firstly, hasad as denoted by the Arabic word 'ghibtah', is taken here in the sense of emulation. There is a difference between jealousy and emulation. Hasad is a desire that one possessing a blessing should be deprived of it; whether the person who feels jealous acquires it or not, while emulation signifies a desire to possess a thing, whether the actual owner is deprived of it or not. Since hasad is haram (religiously unlawful) under Ijma (consensus of opinion), the Ulama have translated, by way of metaphor, this word hasad as ghibtah, meaning emulation. Ghibtah is permissible in worldly affairs and commendable in religious matters.

The second interpretation is that the term hasad has been used in a hypothetical sense, i.e., if hasad were permissible it would have been so with regard to the two persons mentioned above.

HADITH–6

(٦) عَنْ اَبِىْ مُوْسىٰ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِ الَّذِىْ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ مَثَلُ الْاُتْرُجَّةِ رِيْحُهَا طَيِّبٌ وَطَعْمُهَا طَيِّبٌ وَمَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِ الَّذِىْ لَايَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ مَثَلُ التَّمْرَةِ لَارِيْحَ لَهَا وَطَعْمُهَا حُلْوٌ وَمَثَلُ الْمُنَافِقِ الَّذِىْ لَايَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ كَمَثَلِ الْحَنْظَلَةِ لَيْسَ لَهَا رِيْحٌ وَطَعْمُهَا مُرٌّ وَمَثَلُ الْمُنَافِقِ الَّذِىْ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ مَثَلُ الرَّيْحَانَةِ رِيْحُهَا طَيِّبٌ وَطَعْمُهَا مُرٌّ (رواه البخارى ومسلم والنسائى وابن ماجه)

Hadhrat Abu Musa (Radhiyallaho anho) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said:

> "The example of a mo'min (believer) who reads the Qur'an is like that of citron which has a pleasant smell and a sweet taste. The example of a mo'min who does not read the Qur'an is like that of a date, which has no smell, though its taste is sweet. The munafiq (hypocrite) who does not read the Qur'an is like a wild gourd, which has a bitter taste and no smell, and the munafiq who reads the Qur'an is like a raihan (sweet-smelling flower), which is fragrant but has a bitter taste."

In this hadith an abstract quality of reading the Glorious Qur'an, has been compared to concrete objects in order to illustrate the difference between reading and not reading the Holy Qur'an. Otherwise it is obvious that material objects of this world like citrons and dates cannot match the sweetness and perfume of the Qur'an. There are, however, special points in this similitude, which pertain to the deep knowledge of the Prophets and testify to the vast understanding of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam). Consider, for example, the citron, which gives flavour to the mouth, cleans the stomach and stimulates digestion. These are the qualities specially associated with the reading of the Qur'an since, fragrance in the mouth, internal purity and spiritual strength result from reading the Qur'an. It is also said that if there is citron in the house, no jinn can enter it. If it is true, then such is the speciality of the Qur'an. Some physicians say that citron strengthens the memory and it is reported in 'Ihya' by Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) that three things, i.e., cleaning the teeth with miswak, fasting and reading the Holy Qur'an strengthen the memory.

In the book of Abu Dawood, it is mentioned at the conclusion of the hadith given above that a good companion is like a person having musk. Even if you do not get musk, you will at least enjoy its fragrance. An evil companion is like a person with a furnace, near whom, even if you do not get blackened, you certainly cannot avoid the smoke. It is, therefore, important that one should be very careful in choosing his companions, with whom he has to mix generally.

HADITH-7

(٧) عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَرْفَعُ بِهٰذَا الْكِتَابِ اَقْوَامًا وَيَضَعُ بِهِ اٰخَرِيْنَ (رواه مسلم)

Hadhrat 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) *said*: "Allah exalts many people by means of this Book (the Holy Qu'ran), and He also degrades and disgraces many others by means of the same."

People who believe in the Holy Book and act upon it are given by Allah position of honour and respect, both in this life as well as in the Hereafter, while those who do not act upon it are disgraced by Allah. This principle is also borne out by the various ayaat of the Holy Qur'an. At one place it reads:

يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيْرًا وَّيَهْدِىْ بِهِ كَثِيْرًا

"He misleads many by this Book and guides many thereby."

At another place we come across:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَاهُوَ شِفَآءٌ وَّرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَلَايَزِيْدُ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ اِلَّا خَسَارًا

"And We send down in the Qur'an that which is a healing and mercy for believers, though it increases for the evil-doers naught save ruin."

The Prophet (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) is also reported to have said: "Many hypocrites of this Ummat will be the qurraa, i.e., those who recite the Qur'an correctly." In 'Ihya-ul-Ulum' it is reported from some Mashaa'ikh, "As soon as a man starts reading a surah (chapter of the Holy Qur'an), the Angels start invoking mercy for him and they continue to do so till he stops reading; on the contrary another person starts reading a surah and the Angels start cursing him and they continue to do so till he completes the reading."

Some scholars have stated that sometimes a man reads the Holy Qur'an and invokes curses on himself without even knowing it. For instance, he reads in the Holy Qur'an:

اَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللهِ عَلَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ

"Beware, the curse of Allah is on the wrong-doers" and he exposes himself to this warning because of his wrong-doings.

In the like manner, he reads in the Qur'an:

لَعْنَةُ اللهِ عَلَى الْكٰذِبِيْنَ

"The curse of Allah is upon the liars".

In fact he exposes himself to the warning by reason of his being himself a liar.

'Aamir ibn Waathilah (Radhiyallaho anho) says that Hadhrat 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho) had appointed Naafi' ibn Abdul Harith as the Governor of Mecca. Once he asked the latter as to whom he had appointed as the administrator of forests. "Ibn Abzi" replied Naafi'. "Who is Ibn-e-Abzi?" said Hadhrat 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho). "He is one of our slaves" was the reply. "Why have you appointed a slave the ameer (leader)?" objected Hadhrat 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho). "Because he recites the Book of Allah" said Naafi'. At this, Hadhrat 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho) narrated the hadith that it had been said by Rasullullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that, because of this Book, Allah elevates many people and degrades many.

HADITH-8

(٨) عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمٰنِ بْنِ عَوْفٍ رَضِىَ اللهُ تَعَالٰى عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِىِّ ﷺ قَالَ ثَلٰثٌ تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ اَلْقُرْاٰنُ يُحَاجُّ الْعِبَادَ لَهُ ظَهْرٌ وَّبَطْنٌ وَّالْاَمَانَةُ وَالرَّحِمُ تُنَادِىْ اَلَا مَنْ وَّصَلَنِىْ وَصَلَهُ اللهُ وَمَنْ قَطَعَنِىْ قَطَعَهُ اللهُ (رواه فى شرح السنة)

Hadhrat 'Abdur Rahman ibn 'Auf (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "On the Day of Judgement, three things will be under the shade of the Arsh (Allah's Throne). One, the Holy Qur'an which will argue with men—the Qur'an has both an exterior and an interior. The second will be amaanat (trust). The third will be kinship, which shall proclaim, 'O. Allah! have mercy on the person who upheld me, and deprive him of Your mercy whosoever severed me.'"

"Three things will be under the shade of the 'Arsh" signifies their utmost nearness in the sublime presence of Allah. "The Qur'an will argue" means that it will plead the cause of those people who read it, respect it and act upon its commandments. It will intercede on their behalf and solicit the upgrading of their rank. Mulla 'Ali Qari has narrated on the authority of 'Tirmizi' (a book of Hadith) that, in the presence of Almighty Allah, the Holy Qur'an will beg Allah to grant an apparel to its reader. Almighty Allah will give him a crown of honour. The Qur'an will again beg for additional favours for him. Thereupon Almighty Allah will award the reader a complete robe of honour. The Qur'an will again beseech Allah to be pleased with him, and Almighty Allah will express His pleasure to him.

We find in this life that the pleasure of the beloved is considered to be the most coveted gift. Similarly in the life Hereafter, no bounty shall stand comparison with the pleasure of our Beloved Almighty Allah. And in case of those who ignore their duty towards the Qur'an, it will challenge them saying, "Did you care for me? Did you fulfil your obligations towards me?"

It has been reported on the authority of Imam Abu Hanifa (Rahmatullah alaih) in 'Ihya' that it is the due right of the Qur'an that it should be read completely twice a year. Those of us who never care to read the Qur'an should first consider how they will defend themselves against such a strong plaintiff. Death is inevitable and there can be no escape from it.

The meaning of the expression "exterior and interior of the Qur'an" is evident. The Qur'an has an apparent meaning which can be understood by all, but the deeper spiritual significance is not understood by everybody. It is in this connection that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has said: "Whosoever expresses his personal opinion in respect of anything in the Qur'an commits a mistake, even if he be right in his opinion."

Some scholars hold that the word 'exterior', refers to its words, which can be recited properly by everybody and the word 'interior', i.e., spirit, refers to its meanings, and its underlying ideas, the understanding of which varies with the ability of the readers.

Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) said, "If you seek knowledge, you should meditate on the meanings of the Qur'an, because it embodies the history of former as well as of latter times." It is, however, essential to observe the pre-requisites for interpreting the Qur'an. An unbecoming present-day fashion is that even those who possess little or no knowledge of Arabic vocabulary offer their personal opinion on the basis of vernacular translations of the Qur'an. Specialists have laid down that any one attempting a commentary of the Holy Qur'an should be well versed in fifteen subjects. These, as briefly given below, will show that it is not possible for everybody to understand the underlying significance and real meanings of the Holy Qur'an.

(1) *Lughat*, i.e., philology of language, which helps in understanding the appropriate meanings of words. Mujahid (Rahmatullah alaih) says, "one who believes in Allah and the Day of Judgement should not open his lips in respect of the Qur'an, unless he is thoroughly conversant with the philology of the Arabic language. Quite often an Arabic word has several meanings. A person may be knowing only one or two of them, though in a given context the actual meaning may be quite different."

(2) *Nahw*, i.e., syntax, a branch of grammar, which helps in understanding the relation of a sentence with another and also of I'raab (vowel sounds) of the letters of a word. A change in I'raab often means a change in the meaning.

(3) *Sarf*, i.e., etymology, a branch of grammar, which helps in knowing the root words and conjugations. The meaning of a word changes with the change in the root and with a change in its conjugation.

Ibn Faris (Rahmatullah alaih) says, "One who loses the knowledge of etymology loses a great deal." 'Allamah Zamakhshari (Rahmatullah alaih) mentions that, when a certain person set to translate the ayat—

يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ

On the day that We shall call each and every people after their leader,

he ignorantly rendered it thus: "On the day that We shall call each people after their mothers." He supposed that the singular Arabic word 'imam' (leader) was the plural of the Arabic word 'umm' (mother). If he had been conversant with etymology, he would have known that the plural of 'umm' is not 'imam'.

(4) *Ishtiqaaq*, i.e., derivatives. It is necessary to have the knowledge of derivatives and their root words, because if a word has been derived from two different root words, it will have two different meanings, e.g., the word 'maseeh' is derivable from 'masah' which means to touch or to move wet hands over, and also from 'masaahah' which means measurement.

(5) *Ilmul Ma'aani*, i.e., knowledge of semantics, because phrase constructions are understood from their meanings.

(6) *Ilmul Bayaan*, i.e., knowledge of figures of speech, like similes and metaphors, due to which expressions or shades of meaning or similes and metaphors become known.

(7) *Ilmul Badee'*, i.e., knowledge of rhetoric, the knowledge which reveals the beauty of language and its implications.

The last three are the branches of Ilmul Balaaghah (knowledge of oratory), and are considered very important subjects, which a commentator should master, because the Glorious Qur'an is a perfect miracle and its amazing constructions can only be understood after mastering these subjects.

(8) *Ilmul Qiraa'ah*, i.e., knowledge of the art of pronunciation, because different methods of recitation sometimes convey different meanings, and sometimes one meaning is to be preferred over the other.

(9) *Ilmul Aqaa'id*, i.e., knowledge of the fundamentals of faith. This is necessary to explain certain analogies. The literal meaning of certain ayaat referring to Almighty Allah is not the correct one. For example, the analogy in the ayat—

يَدُ اللهِ فَوْقَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ

(The hand of Allah is over their hands)

will have to be explained because Allah has no physical hands.

(10) *Usoolul Fiqh* i.e., Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. These are necessary for reasoning out and finding arguments in the basic support of statements.

(11) *Asbaabun Nuzool*, i.e., the particular circumstances which caused revelation. The meaning of an ayat will be better understood if we know how and when it had been revealed. Sometimes the true meaning of an ayat is understood only if we know the circumstances in which the ayat had been revealed.

(12) *An Naasikh wal Mansookh*, i.e., knowledge of commandments that have subsequently been abrogated or changed, so that abrogated commandments may be distinguished from the standing ones.

(13) *Ilmul Fiqh*, i.e., knowledge of Islamic Jurisprudence, because it is only through this knowledge that we arrive at a complete understanding of general principles.

(14) Knowledge of such ahadith that happen to be commentary on certain brief verses of the Qur'an.

(15) The last but most important is the Wahbi ilm, or the gifted understanding, bestowed by Almighty Allah upon His selected ones, as is referred in the hadith–

مَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا عَلِمَ وَرَّثَهُ اللهُ عِلْمَ مَالَمْ يَعْلَمْ

Whosoever acts upon what he knows, Almighty Allah bestows upon him the knowledge of things not known to him.

It is this special understanding that was implied in the reply of Hadhrat 'Ali (Karramallaahu wajhahu) (may Allah

be kind to him) when he was asked by the people if he had received from Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) any special knowledge or instructions which were not received by others. Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) said, "I swear by Him Who made the Paradise and created life that I possess nothing special, except the clear understanding which Almighty Allah bestows upon a person in respect of the Qur'an."

Ibn Abid Dunyaa (Rahmatullah alaih) says that the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and that which can be derived out of it are as vast as a boundless ocean.

The branches of knowledge described above are like tools, i.e. essential pre-requisite for a commentator. A commentary written by a person who is not thoroughly acquainted with these branches of knowledge will be based on his personal opinion, which is prohibited. The Sahabah (Companions of the Holy Prophet (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) already had Arabic language as their mother-tongue, and they reached the depth of the rest of the knowledge by means of their illuminating contact that they had with Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam).

Allamah Suyuti says that those who think that it is beyond the capacity of a man to acquire Wahbi ilm, or gifted understanding, are not right. To get this knowledge from Allah, one should adopt the means to this end, e.g., acting upon the knowledge that one has acquired, and disinclination towards the world.

It is stated in 'Keemiyaa-e-Sa'aadat' that three persons are not blessed with complete understanding of the Qur'an. First, one who is not well versed in Arabic, secondly, one who persists in committing a major sin or indulges in act of religious innovation, because these actions blacken his heart, which in turn prevents him from understanding the Qur'an. Thirdly, one who is a rationalist, even in the matter of faith, and feels embarassed when he reads an ayat of the Qur'an which he is not able to fully rationalize.

اَللّٰهُمَّ احْفَظْنَا مِنْهُمْ

May Allah protect us from all such sins and evils.

HADITH 9

(٩) عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ يُقَالُ لِصَاحِبِ الْقُرْآنِ اِقْرَأْ وَارْتَقِ وَرَتِّلْ كَمَا كُنْتَ تُرَتِّلُ فِىْ الدُّنْيَا فَاِنَّ مَنْزِلَكَ عِنْدَ اٰخِرِ اٰيَةٍ تَقْرَأُهَا (رواه أحمد والترمذى وأبوداود و النسائى وابن ماجه وابن حبان فى صحيحه)

Hadhrat 'Abdullah ibn Amr (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alihe wasallam) said: "On the Day of Judgement, it will be said to the Man devoted to the Qur'an, 'Go on reciting the Qur'an and continue ascending the storeys of Jannat (Paradise) and recite in the slow manner you had been reading in worldly life; your final abode will be where you reach at the time of the last ayat of your recitation."

"The man of Qur'an" apparently means a hafiz. Mulla 'Ali Qari has explained it fully that this honour is reserved for a hafiz, and that this hadith does not apply to one who reads by looking into the Holy Book. First, because the words "Man of Qur'an" point towards a hafiz and secondly there is a tradition in Musnad Ahmad–

حَتّٰى يَقْرَأَ شَيْئًا مَّعَهُ

Till he reads of whatever Qur'an is with him.

This word more clearly refers to a hafiz, although a reader who remains very often engaged in reciting the Qur'an may also be implied.

It is written in 'Mirqaat' that this hadith does not apply to a reader who is accursed by the Qur'an. This is with reference to the hadith that there are many readers of the Qur'an who read the Qur'an but the Qur'an invokes curses upon them. Therefore, the reading of Qur'an by a person who does not adhere to the correct tenets does not constitute an argument that he is acceptable to Allah. Many Ahadith of this type relate to the Khawarij (a sect who were opposed to Hadhrat 'Ali (Radhiyallaho anho).

In this commentary, Shah Abdul Aziz (Rahmatullah alaih) has written that 'tarteel' literally means reading with good and clear pronunciation, while according to Islamic principles it means reading in accordance with certain rules as follows:

(1) The letters of the alphabets should be correctly uttered to ensure their correct pronunciation so that '(ط)' is not read as '(ت)' and '(ض)' and so on.

(2) Stopping correctly at the pauses, so that the joining or finishing of the verses may not take place at inappropriate places.

(3) The correct pronunciation of the vowel sounds.

(4) Raising the voice slightly so that the words of Qur'an uttered by the mouth may reach the ears and thus influence the heart.

(5) Setting the sound in a way that it may become full of pathos and may affect the heart quickly, because a pathetic voice influences the heart at once, moves and strengthens the soul more affectively.

The physicians are of the opinion that if a medicine is required to affect the heart quickly, it should be given a sweet smell by means of a perfume, for the heart is sensitive to sweet smell and if the medicine is required to affect the liver, it should be sweetened with sugar because the liver likes sweet things. Therefore, if a perfume is used at the time of recitation, it will have a better influence on the heart.

(6) Tashdeed (نّ) (doubling of letters) and madd (نٓ) (prolongation of letters) should be fully pronounced because this reveals the grandeur of the Qur'an and adds to its effectiveness.

(7) As stated earlier, the reader's heart should respond to the ayat indicating mercy of Allah or chastisement by Him.

The above-mentioned seven rules constitute the correct way of reciting the Qur'an, which is called tarteel, and the sole object of all this is to reach the correct understanding and grasp of the deeper meaning of the Holy Qur'an.

Hadhrat Umm-e-Salamah (Radhiyallaho anha) was once asked by someone as to how Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) used to recite Qur'an. She said, "In a way that all vowel sounds were clear and the pronunciation of each letter was distinct." It is desirable to recite the Qur'an with propriety even if one may not understand the meaning. Ibn Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho) said that he preferred

to recite with propriety, short surahs like Al-Qaari'ah (القارعة) or Izaa zulzilah (اذا زلزلت) rather than to recite (otherwise long) surahs like Aal-e-Imran (آل عمران) without it.

The commentators and learned scholars explain the above-mentioned hadith to mean that, for each ayat recited, the reciter will be elevated to a higher level in Paradise. From other ahadith, it appears that there are as many levels in Paradise as the number of ayaat in the Holy Qur'an. Therefore, the status of a person will be raised by as many levels in Paradise as the number of ayaat in which he is well versed. As such, the one best versed in the whole Qur'an will reach the highest level in Paradise.

According to Mulla 'Ali Qari, it is mentioned in a hadith that there is no level in Jannat higher than that given to the reader of the Qur'an. So the readers will ascend in proportion to the number of ayaat recited by them in the world. 'Allamah Daani (Rahmatullah alaih) says that authorities agree that there are six thousand ayaat in the Qur'an. But there is some difference of opinion about the numbers over and above six thousand. These are variously reported to be 204, 14, 19, 25, 36.

It is written in 'Sharhul-Ihya' that each ayat corresponds to a higher level in Paradise. So a reader will be asked to ascend according to his recitation. One who reads the whole of the Qur'an will attain the highest level in Paradise. And one who knows only a part of the Qur'an will rise up to the proportionate level. In brief, the stage or level reached will be fixed by the number of ayaat recited.

According to my understanding, the above hadith has a different meaning–

فَاِنْ كَانَ صَوَابًا فَمِنَ اللهِ وَاِنْ كَانَ خَطَأً فَمِنِّىْ وَمِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ وَاللهُ وَرَسُوْلُهُ مِنْهُ بَرِيْئَانِ

(If my interpretation is corect, it is from Allah and, if it is wrong, it is from me and from Satan, and Allah and His Prophet are free from it.)

I think that the elevation implied in this hadith is not that which can be determined by the number of ayat to be recited, i.e., when one ayat be recited, the status will be raised by one step, whether it be read with propriety or

without. But this hadith points to another kind of elevation which is a type of an inner experience and is related to the recitation being with propriety or without it. So a person will be able to read in the same way as he reads in this worldly life. Mullah 'Ali Qari (Rahmatullah alaih) has quoted from one hadith that, if a person reads the Qur'an very often in this life, he will remember it in the life Hereafter, otherwise he will forget it. May Allah help us there. There are many among us who memorized the Qur'an in their childhood through the religious zeal of their parents, but through sheer carelessness and negligence on their own part, have forgotten this capability in the later part of this very life. It is mentioned in other ahadith that one who dies while labouring and working hard to commit the Glorious Qur'an to memory, will be reckoned amongst the huffaaz. Allah's bounty has no limits. We should only seek it. As a poet says:

اس کے الطاف تو ہیں عام شہیدی سب پر
تجھ سے کیا ضد تھی اگر تو کسی قابل ہوتا

O' Shaheedi! His bounties are common for all, You could not be denied (these bounties), if you were all worthy.

HADITH 10

(١٠) عَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُوْدٍ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ مَنْ قَرَأَ حَرْفًا مِّنْ كِتَابِ اللهِ فَلَهُ بِهٖ حَسَنَةٌ وَالْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ اَمْثَالِهَا لَااَقُوْلُ الٓمّٓ حَرْفٌ اَلِفٌ حَرْفٌ وَلَامٌ حَرْفٌ وَمِيْمٌ حَرْفٌ (رواه الترمذى وقال هذا حديث صحيح غريب إسنادا والدارمى)

Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasullullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whosoever reads one letter of the Book of Allah is credited with one blessing and one blessing is equal to tenfold the like thereof in its reward. I do not say that الٓمّٓ (Alif Laam Meem) is one letter, but '(ا)' (alif) is one letter, '(ل)' (laam) is one letter, and '(م)' (meem) is one letter."

The hadith affirms that whereas, ordinarily for the purpose of reward an act as a whole is taken into account but in the case of Qur'an it is not so, parts also count. Thus, in

reading each letter is counted as one good deed. And the reward of each good deed will be increased ten times, as promised by Almighty Allah.

مَنْ جَآءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ اَمْثَالِهَا

"One who brings a good deed, for him will be tenfold the like thereof."

Ten times, however, is the minimum increase.

وَاللّٰهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ

Allah multiplies the reward for whomsoever He desires.

That each letter of the Holy Qur'an, when read, amounts to a good deed, has been illustrated by Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) by saying that 'الٓمّ' (Alif Laam Meem) is not one letter, but '(ا)' (alif), '(ل)' (laam) and '(م)' (meem) are three separate letters, so it will comprise thirty blessings. There is a difference of opinion among scholars whether 'الم' (alif, laam, meem) is the beginning of Surah Baqarah or of Surah Feel. If it is the beginning of Surah Baqarah, and only three letters are counted, as they are written, then the blessings will be thirty. And if it is the beginning of Surah Feel, then '(ا)' (alif), '(ل)' (laam) and '(م)' (meem), which is the beginning of Surah Baqarah will be nine letters. Therefore, its reward will be ninety blessings.

Baihaqi (Rahmatullah alaih) has reported another hadith similar to this portion of the above-mentioned hadith, viz., "I do not say that '(بسم الله)' (Bismillah) is one letter, but uphold that '(ب)' (ba) '(س)' (sin) and '(م)' (meem), etc. are separate letters."

HADITH–11

(١١) عَنْ مُعَاذِ نِ الْجُهَنِيِّ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَمِلَ بِمَا فِيْهِ اُلْبِسَ وَالِدَاهُ تَاجًا يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ضَوْئُهُ اَحْسَنُ مِنْ ضَوْءِ الشَّمْسِ فِيْ بُيُوْتِ الدُّنْيَا لَوْ كَانَتْ فِيْكُمْ فَمَا ظَنُّكُمْ بِالَّذِىْ عَمِلَ بِهٰذَا (رواه أحمد وأبوداود وصححه الحاكم)

Hadhrat Mu'aaz Juhani (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said.

"Whoever reads the Qur'an and acts upon what is contained in it, his parents will be made to wear a crown on the Day of Judgement, the brilliance of which will excel that of the sun, if the same were within your wordly houses. So, what do you think about the person who himself acts upon it?"

Thus, it is through the virtues of his reading the Qur'an and acting upon it that the parents of the leader will be honoured with a crown, the brilliance of which will far excel the light of the sun even if the sun were within one's own house. The sun is at a great distance from us and even then its light is so bright. If the sun comes down into one's house, its light and brilliance will surely increase manifold. The light of the crown to be worn by the parents of the reader will be still more brilliant. When this is in store for the parents, what will be the reward of the reader himself? Surely if the beneficiaries get so much, the reward of the person who is the real cause should be much more. The parents get this reward solely because they were the cause of the reader coming into being, or were responsible for his education.

In addition to the fact that the light of the sun will be far greater if it were in one's own house, this simile implies yet another delicate point. Attachment and liking for a thing increase when it always remains with a person. Therefore, the feeling of strangeness for the sun due to distance will give place to attachment, because of its close nearness all the time. Thus, in addition to describing the brilliance of the crown, the hadith implies this attachment with the crown and also the great satisfaction that it belongs to oneself. Everybody gets benefited by the sun, but if it were to be given entirely to a person, how very proud he would feel.

Haakim (Rahmatullah alaih) has reported from Buraidah, (Radhiyallaho anho) saying of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam); "One who recites the Qur'an and acts upon it will be made to wear a crown woven with noor, and his parents will be made to wear garments, which will be more valuable than the entire world. They will say, 'Almighty Allah! what is it that we are being given these garments for?' 'In lieu of the reading of Qur'an by your child', will be the reply."

It is given in Jam'ul Fawaa'id by Tabrani (Rahmatullah

alaih) that Hadhrat Anas (Radhiyallaho anho) had reported the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), "Whoever teaches the reading of Qur'an to his son (without memorizing it), all his sins, whether previous or subsequent, will be forgiven; and whoever makes his child memorize the Qur'an will be raised on the Day of Judgement in the semblance of a full moon; and his son will be asked to start reciting, and for every ayat read by the child, the status of the parent will be raised to the next higher grade of Jannat, till the recitation of the Holy Qur'an is completed."

Such are the blessings for teaching the Qur'an to your children. This is not all. There is another point. God forbid, if you deprive your child of the knowledge of (deen) (religion) for the sake of a few coppers, not only shall you be deprived of eternal reward but you shall be held answerable before Allah. Is it not a fact that you are depriving your dear child of reading the Qur'an for fear that mullahs and huffaaz, after memorizing the Qur'an become dependent on others for their living? Please remember that not only do you expose your children to eternal misery, but carry on your shoulders a very heavy accountability. The hadith that–

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُوْلٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

Each one of you is a guardian, and will be questioned about those under his control

means that everyone shall be questioned about his subordinates and dependents as to what extent he taught (deen) to them. Surely one should guard himself and his dependents against these shortcomings. But (as the proverb goes) "should one discard clothes for fear of lice?" Nay, one should surely try to keep his clothes clean. If you impart religious education to your child, you will be free from your responsibilities. As long as the child lives, and whatever good deed he does and salaat he performs and forgiveness that he seeks from Allah for you, will elevate your position in Paradise. If for the sake of this life and for the lust of a few coppers, you keep him ignorant of (deen), not only will you have to suffer for this misdeed but whatever evil and misdeeds he does, your account will not be free from their burden. For God's sake, have pity on yourselves. This life is only a passing phase and death will put an end

to all its hardships, however great, but the sufferings for which there is no end, will be everlasting.

HADITH NO–12

(١٢) عَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ ﷺ يَقُوْلُ لَوْ جُعِلَ الْقُرْآنُ فِىْ اِهَابٍ ثُمَّ اُلْقِىَ فِى النَّارِ مَااحْتَرَقَ (رواه الدارمى)

'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir (Radhiyallaho anho) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "If the Qur'an is placed in a skin and then put in the fire, it will not get burnt."

The scholars of hadith have interpreted this hadith in two ways. Some of them take the words 'skin' and 'fire' in the literal sense. In this case the hadith refers to a miracle which was particular in the lifetime of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) in the same way as the miracles of other prophets were specific to their lifetime. In the second case, the word 'skin' is interpreted to mean the human skin and the word 'fire' means the fire of Hell. Thus the application of the hadith is general and not confined to any particular period. It means that if any hafiz of Qur'an were cast in due to any crime on his part, the fire of Hell will not affect him. In another hadith it is said that the fire will not even touch him. The second interpretation of the above-mentioned hadith is also supported by another hadith reported by Abu Umaamah (Radhiyallaho anho) and also given in the book Sharhus Sunnah, by Mulla Ali Qari, which says, "Learn the Qur'an by heart, because Almighty Allah does not punish the heart which contains the Qur'an ." In its meanings this hadith is clear and confirmed by the Qur'an. Those who regard memorizing the Qur'an as useless should, for God's sake, ponder over these merits. The last-mentioned one alone should prompt everybody to dedicate his life to learning the Qur'an by heart, because there is no one who has not committed sins and does not deserve the fire of Hell.

In Sharhul Ihya there is a list of those people who will rest in the shade of Allah's mercy (protection) on the horrible Day of Judgement. It is mentioned therein that, according to a hadith reported from Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) by Dailami that the custodians of Qur'an, in other words those who learn the Qur'an by heart, will be in

the shade of Allah, in the company of the Prophets and other virtuous people.

HADITH–13

(۱۳) عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَظْهَرَهُ فَاَحَلَّ حَلَالَهُ وَحَرَّمَ حَرَامَهُ اَدْخَلَهُ اللّٰهُ الْجَنَّةَ وَشَفَّعَهُ فِيْ عَشَرَةٍ مِّنْ اَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ كُلُّهُمْ قَدْ وَجَبَتْ لَهُ النَّارُ رواه أحمد والترمذی وقال هذا حدیث غریب وحفص بن سلیمان الراوی لیس هو بالقوی یضعف فی الحدیث ورواه ابن ماجه والدارمی

Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) says that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever reads Qur'an and learns it by heart, and regards what it makes lawful as lawful and its unlawful as forbidden, will be admitted into Jannat by the Almighty Allah who will also accept his intercession in respect of ten such persons of his family who shall have been doomed to Hell."

By the grace of Allah, entry into Jannat is ensured for every believer though it may come after his being punished for his misdeeds. The hafiz will, however, be favoured with this entry right from the beginning. The ten persons in whose favour his intercession will be accepted will be those sinful and disobedient Muslims who are guilty of major sins. There can be no intercession, however, for the unbelievers. Almighty Allah has said:

اِنَّهٗ مَنْ يُّشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَاْوٰهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْصَارٍ

Whosoever ascribes partners unto Allah, for him Allah has forbidden Jannat, and their place is Hell – and for evil-doers there will be none amongst the helpers.

It is also said in the Qur'an:

مَاكَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَنْ يَّسْتَغْفِرُوْا لِلْمُشْرِكِيْنَ (الآية)

The Prophet and the believers are not allowed to pray for the forgiveness of 'mushrikin' (Plural of mushrik, one who ascribes partners unto Allah) the polytheists even if they are their relatives.

The Qur'anic ayat clearly say that polytheists will never be forgiven. The intercession of huffaaz will, therefore, be for those Muslims whose entry into Hell has been determined by their sins.

Those who are not huffaaz and cannot memorize the Qur'an should at least make one of their relatives a hafiz, so that by His grace they may be saved from their own evil-doings.

Allah be thanked for this gracious favour on the person whose father, uncles and grandfathers both maternal and paternal, were all huffaaz. (This applies to the author May Allah bless him with more favours).

HADITH–14

(۱۴) عَنْ اَبِیْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ تَعَلَّمُوا الْقُرْآنَ فَاقْرَأُوْهُ فَاِنَّ مَثَلَ الْقُرْآنِ لِمَنْ تَعَلَّمَ فَقَرَأَ وَقَامَ بِهٖ كَمَثَلِ جِرَابٍ مَحْشُوٍّ مِسْكًا تَفُوْحُ رِيْحُهٗ كُلَّ مَكَانٍ وَمَثَلُ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَهٗ فَرَقَدَ وَهُوَ فِيْ جَوْفِهٖ كَمَثَلِ جِرَابٍ اُوْكِيَ عَلٰى مِسْكٍ (رواه الترمذی والنسائی وابن ماجه وابن حبان)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Learn the Qur'an and recite it, because the example of one who learns the Qur'an, reads it and recites it in Tahajjud (salaat late after midnight) is like an open bag full of musk, the fragrance whereof spreads over the entire place, and a person who has learnt the Qur'an but sleeps while the Qur'an is in his heart, is like a bag full of musk but with its mouth closed."

It means that the example of one who learns the Quran and cares for it and recites it in Tahajjud salaat is like that of a musk-container which, if opened, fills the whole house with its sweet smell. In the same way, the entire house is lit up with divine light and blessings due to the recitation by the hafiz. Even if the hafiz remains asleep or does not recite through his negligence, the Qur'an in his heart is in any case the musk. This negligence resulted in the loss that others were deprived of the blessings of Qur'an, but his heart does, in any case, contain the musk of Qur'an.

HADITH NO-15

(١٥) عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ اِنَّ الَّذِىْ لَيْسَ فِىْ جَوْفِهِ شَىْءٌ مِّنَ الْقُرْآنِ كَالْبَيْتِ الْخَرِبِ (رواه الترمذى وقال هذا حديث صحيح ورواه الدارمى والحاكم وصححه)

Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho) has narrated the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam): "He in whose heart there is no part of the Qur'an is like a deserted house."

The allusion to a deserted house has a subtle meaning, which is expressed by the proverb that "an idle man's brain is the devil's workshop (literally the demon gets hold of an empty house). Similarly a heart, devoid of Qur'an, gets more and more possessed by Satan. What an emphasis is there in this hadith for memorizing the Holy Qur'an, that the heart which has not secured it has been likened to a deserted house.

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) says: "In the house where the Qur'an is read, the household members increase, virtues and blessings multiply, angels descend upon them and Satan quits the house. Whereas the house in which Qur'an is not recited, life therein becomes straitened and devoid of blessings, angels leave the house and Satan ravages it."

Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) and some others have reported Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) to have said that a deserted house is one in which the Holy Qur'an is not recited.

HADITH-16

(١٦) عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهَا اَنَّ النَّبِىَّ ﷺ قَالَ قِرَاءَةُ الْقُرْآنِ فِى الصَّلٰوةِ اَفْضَلُ مِنْ قِرَاءَةِ الْقُرْآنِ فِىْ غَيْرِ الصَّلٰوةِ وَقِرَاءَةُ الْقُرْآنِ فِىْ غَيْرِ الصَّلٰوةِ اَفْضَلُ مِنَ التَّسْبِيْحِ وَالتَّكْبِيْرِ وَالتَّسْبِيْحُ اَفْضَلُ مِنَ الصَّدَقَةِ والصَّدَقَةُ اَفْضَلُ مِنَ الصَّوْمِ وَالصَّوْمُ جُنَّةٌ مِّنَ النَّارِ (رواه البيهقى فى شعب الإيمان)

Hadhrat 'Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaho anha) says that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Recitation of

the Qur'an in salaat is more rewarding than the recitation outside salaat; recitation outside salaat is preferable to tasbeeh and takbeer (repeating words of Praise for Allah); tasbeeh is superior to sadaqah (alms); sadaqah to sowm (fasting) and sowm is protection against Fire."

The superiority of recitation of the Qur'an over zikr (glorification and remembrance of Allah) is evident because Qur'an is the Word of Allah. As mentioned earlier, the superiority of the Word of Allah over the speech of others is like His superiority over His creation. The superiority of zikr over sadaqah has been stressed in other ahadith as well. But the superiority of sadaqah over sowm as given in this hadith, seems contrary to that given in some other ahadith where sowm is said to be better than sadaqah.' This difference is due to the variations in the type of people and their conditions of life.

According to this hadith sowm comes last in the order of merit. When sowm is protection against the Fire of Hell, we can imagine numerous blessing of the recitation of Qur'an.

The author of 'Ihya' reports on the authority of Hadhrat' Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) that for every letter recited there are hundred blessings for one who reads the Qur'an while standing in salaat, fifty blessings for one who reads while sitting in salaat, twenty-five blessings for one who reads in the state of wudhu outside salaat, ten blessings for one who reads without wudhu, and one blessing for him who does not read himself but listens eagerly to the reader.

HADITH-17

(١٧) عَنْ اَبِىْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ اَيُحِبُّ اَحَدُكُمْ اِذَا رَجَعَ اِلٰى اَهْلِهِ اَنْ يَّجِدَ فِيْهِ ثَلَاثَ خَلِفَاتٍ عِظَامٍ سِمَانٍ قُلْنَا نَعَمْ قَالَ فَثَلَاثُ اٰيَاتٍ يَقْرَأُ بِهِنَّ فِىْ صَلَاتِهِ خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنْ ثَلَاثِ خَلِفَاتٍ عِظَامٍ سِمَانٍ (رواه مسلم)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) says: "Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) asked us, 'Does any one of you like that when he returns home, he should find three she-camels, pregnant and fat.' We said, 'We would love to do so.' Then Rasulullah (Sal-

lallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Three ayaat which one of you may recite in his salaat are better than three big pregnant and fat she-camels."

A similar subject-matter has been described in hadith 3. In this hadith there is a reference to recitation of the Qur'an inside salaat which is more virtuous than recitation outside salaat. That is why a comparison has been made to pregnant she-camels. Because, just as in one case, there is a reference to two virtues, that is salaat and recitation, in the other case there is a reference to two things that is a she-camel and her pregnancy. It has been mentioned under hadith 3 that ahadith of this kind are only for the purpose of a simile, otherwise the everlasting reward of one ayat is more valuable than thousands of mortal she-camels.

HADITH–18

(١٨) عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ اَوْسٍ الثَّقَفِيِّ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ عَنْ جَدِّهٖ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ قِرَاءَةُ الرَّجُلِ الْقُرْآنَ فِيْ غَيْرِ الْمُصْحَفِ اَلْفُ دَرَجَةٍ وَقِرَاءَتُهٗ فِي الْمُصْحَفِ تُضْعَفُ عَلٰى ذَالِكَ اِلٰى اَلْفَيْ دَرَجَةٍ (رواه البيهقى فى شعب الإيمان)

Hazrat Uthman bin Abdullah bin Aus Thaqafi (Radhiyallaho anhum) narrates from his grand-father that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Reciting the Qur'an from memory carries one thousand degrees of spiritual reward, while reading the Qur'an from the Book increases it up to two thousand degrees."

Many virtues of being a hafiz have been mentioned before. In this hadith, however, preference is shown to reading from the Holy Book as compared to reciting it from memory, because reading from the Book is not only conducive to deeper understanding and meditation but also includes several other devotional acts, such as looking into the Qur'an and touching it, etc. The difference in the apparent meanings of the various ahadith has led to a difference of opinion among the scholars of hadith as to whether reading from the Holy Book is better than reciting it from memory. By reason of the above hadith, and because reading from the Book safeguards against making mistakes and includes the virtuous act of looking at the Holy Book, some scholars give preference to reading by looking into

the Book. By reason of other ahadith, and because reciting from memory is conducive to greater devotion and is free from riyaa' (dissimulation) and because this was the way of recitation of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) himself, some scholars consider that reciting from memory is preferable. Imam Nawawi (Rahmatullah alaih) has decided that the preference between the two depends upon the individuals. Some people concentrate and meditate better while reading from the Book, while others do so, reciting from memory. Therefore, reading from the Book is preferable for some and reciting from memory for others. Hafiz Ibn Hajar (Rahmatullah alaih) also has favoured this interpretation in his book 'Fat-hul Baari.'

It is said that on account of excessive reading by Hadhrat Uthman (Radhiyallaho anho) two scripts of the Holy Qur'an tore. Amr ibn Maimoon (Rahmatullah alaih) has mentioned in 'Sharhul Ihya', that one who opens the Holy Qur'an after Fajr (dawn) salaat and reads a hundred ayaat gets a reward as large as the entire world. Reading the Qur'an by looking into it is reported to be beneficial for eyesight. Hadhrat Abu Ubaidah (Radhiyallaho anho) has narrated a lengthy hadith in which each reporter says that he had some trouble with his eyes and that his teacher bade him to recite the Qur'an by looking into it. Hadhrat Imaam Shaafi'ee, (Rahmatullah alaih) often used to open the Qur'an after Ishaa (night) salaat and close it only a little before Fajr salaat.'

HADITH–19

(١٩) عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ اِنَّ هٰذِهِ الْقُلُوْبَ تَصْدَاُ كَمَا يَصْدَاُ الْحَدِيْدُ اِذَا اَصَابَهُ الْمَاءُ قِيْلَ يَارَسُوْلَ اللهِ وَمَا جِلَاءُهَا قَالَ كَثْرَةُ ذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ وَتِلَاوَةُ الْقُرْآنِ (رواه البيهقى فى شعب الإيمان)

Abdullah ibn Umar (Radhiyallaho anhuma) narrated:

"Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "The hearts get rusted as does iron with water. When someone asked, "What could cleanse hearts again?' Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Frequent remembrance of death and recitation of Qur'an."

Excess of sins and negligence in the remembrance of Allah cause the hearts to rust, as water causes iron to rust.

The reading of Qur'an and the remembrance of death polish the rusted hearts. The heart is like a mirror. If it is not cleaned, it will not properly reflect the recognition of Allah. The more burnished and brighter it is, the better will it show from the enlightenment. Therefore, the more we indulge in sinful lust and devilish acts, the more are we deprived of the recognition of Almighty Allah. It is with a view to polishing the mirror of the heart that mashaa'ikh enjoin upon their disciples to devote themselves to self-discipline endeavours, spiritual occupation, incantation and remembrance of Allah.

It is mentioned in some ahadith that when a man commits a sin, a black dot stains his heart. If he repents in real earnest, this dot is removed, but if he commits another sin, another black dot appears. In this way, if he goes on committing sin after sin, his heart gets completely blackened. At this stage the heart becomes quite disinclined to do good, and keeps on turning to evil.

اَللّٰهُمَّ احْفَظْنَا مِنْهُ

May Allah save us from such a stage.

كَلَّا بَلْ ، رَانَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ

"Verily their evil deeds have covered their hearts with rust" refers to this blackening of the heart.

According to another hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "I leave two 'wu'aaz' (plural of waa'iz–preacher)–one speaking and the other silent. That which speaks is the Holy Qur'an and that which is silent is the remembrance of death."

Certainly the words of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) are worthy of loving acceptance. But only those who take proper heed derive benefit from a sermon. On the other hand, if we consider deen itself as being a useless occupation and an obstacle in the way of material progress, we will neither feel the need of spiritual advice nor act upon it.

Hadhrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alaih) says, "People of earlier times believed the Holy Qur'an to be the Commandment of Allah, they contemplated over it throughout the night and acted upon it during the day. Whereas today

you exercise particular care to pronounce its words and vowels correctly, but do not take it as the Commandment of Allah, and do not contemplate over it."

(٢٠) عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَنْهَا قَالَتْ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ اِنَّ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَرَفًا يَتَبَاهَوْنَ بِهٖ وَاِنَّ بَهَاءَ اُمَّتِىْ وَشَرَفَهَا الْقُرْآنُ (رواه فى الحلية)

Hadhrat Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaho anha) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Certainly there is always a thing in which people take pride. And that which is glory and pride for my Ummat is the Holy Qur'an."

People indicate their nobility and dignity by virtue of their lineage, their family and other similar things. The Qur'an is the source of nobility and pride for the Ummat in the sense that reading, memorizing and teaching it, as also acting upon it; in short, everything related to it, confers an honour upon them. Why should it not be so? After all, it is the Word of the Beloved and the Commandment of the Master. Its dignity excels all worldly honours, however great. The achievements of this worldly life, however splendid vanish sooner or later, while the splendour and dignity of the Qur'an is eternal and unbounded.

Even the minor attributes of the Glorious Qur'an are such as we should be proud of, let alone its excellence in other respects, for example, its beautiful composition, wonderful coherence, the right choice of words, the proper development of arguments, the narration of past events and prophecies about the future. Its assailing remarks concerning other people are such as cannot be contradicted, e.g., the remark about the Jews, that they profess their love for Allah, but they never long for death. The listener is impressed by its recitation and the reader never gets tired of reading it. It is usual that, however lovely a discourse may be, it may even be a letter from a beloved who has made one mad; we will become tired of reading it for the twentieth time if not the tenth; or the fortieth time, if not the twentieth. On the other hand, if we just memorize one section of the Qur'an, one may read it two hundred times or four hundred times or go on doing so for the whole life, but one shall never lose interest. And if something prevents us from enjoying it, that will be for a while only. In fact, the more we read the Qur'an, the greater will be our enjoyment

and satisfaction. Even if a few of the above excellent qualities were to be found in any composition, we would be all praise for it. So, if all these qualities were present in a composition to a perfect degree, surely it would have to be regarded with the greatest honour and pride.

Now, we should just reflect on our own condition. How many of us feel really proud of having memorized the whole Qur'an? Does a hafiz command real respect in our eyes? Alas! our honour and pride lie in high university degrees, in big titles, in worldly pomp and show, and in the wealth which we will have to leave behind us on our death. O, Allah! have mercy upon us.

HADITH–21

(۲۱) عن ابى ذر رضى الله عنه قال قلت يارسول الله اوصنى قال عليك بتقوى الله فانه رأس الامر كله قلت يارسول الله زدنى قال عليك بتلاوة القرآن فانه نور لك فى الارض وذخر لك فى السماء (رواه ابن حبان فى صحيحه فى حديث طويل)

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) says that he requested Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) to give him some lasting advice. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Cultivate the fear and reverence of Allah in your heart, because this is the root of all virtuous deeds." I asked him to add something more and he said, "Stick to the reading of the Qur'an, because it is a noor in this life and a provision for the Hereafter."

The fear of Allah is the root of all good actions. A man whose heart is filled with fear of Allah, does neither commit any sin nor experience any difficulty.

ومن يتق الله يجعل له مخرجا ويرزقه من حيث لايحتسب

Whoever fears Allah, Allah will make a way for him out of every difficulty and provide from whence he has no expectation.

Some of the foregoing traditions also disclose that the Qur'an is illuminating. In Sharahul Ihya, Hadhrat Abu Na'eem (Rahmatullah alaih) states that Hadhrat Baasit (Radhiyallaho anho) has reported from Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that the houses in which the Holy

Qur'an is read shine unto the inhabitants of the Heaven as do the stars shine unto the inhabitants of the Earth.

This hadith, which has been quoted from 'At-Targhib', is only a part of a long hadith reported from Ibn Hibban by Mulla Ali Qari in detail and by Suyuti in brief. Although the above-mentioned part of the hadith is sufficient for the purpose of this book, yet the whole hadith includes many essential and useful subjects and, therefore, its subject-matter is given in the following paragraphs.

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anha) says that he inquired from Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) about the number of books revealed by Almighty Allah. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied, "One hundred booklets and four books. Fifty booklets were revealed to Hadhrat Sheeth (Alaihis salaam) (peace be upon him), thirty to Hadhrat Idrees (Alaihis salaam), ten to Hadhrat Ibrahim (Alaihis salaam) and ten to Hadhrat Musa (Alaihis salaam) before the Torah. In addition, four books, i.e., the Torah, the Bible, the Psalms and the Holy Qur'an have been revealed by Almighty Allah." Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) enquired about the contents of the booklets revealed to Hadhrat Ibrahim (Alaihis salaam). Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied that they consisted of proverbs, e.g., "O, you strong and proud king! I did not appoint you to hoard wealth, but to prevent the complaint of the oppressed from reaching me by redressing it beforehand, because I do not reject the complaint of the oppressed person, even though he may be a disbeliever."

The author states that whenever Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) deputed any of his Companions as an ameer or governor, in addition to giving other advice, he used to emphasize:

واتق دعوة المظلوم فانه ليس بينها وبين الله حجاب

Beware of the invocation of the oppressed because between him and Allah there is no veil or intermediary.

As a Persian verse goes:

بترس از آه مظلوماں کہ ہنگام دعا کردن
اجابت از در حق بہر استقبال می آید!

"Beware of the sigh of those oppressed, when they pray,

Divine acceptance readily greets them.

These booklets also mentioned that it is incumbent on a wise man, unless he is deprived of sanity, to divide his time in three parts: one for worship of his Lord; one for self-reckoning to consider what acts, good or bad, he did and one for his lawful earning of livelihood. It is also incumbent upon him to watch of his time and be thoughtful about improving his conditions and to guard his tongue against unnecessary and useless talk. Whoever keeps a check on his own speech, his tongue will indulge less in useless talk.

Also, a wise man should not travel except for three purposes. viz., for making provision for the life Hereafter, or in search of livelihood, or for such recreation as is permissible.

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) then enquired about the contents of the booklets revealed to Hadhrat Musa (Alaihis salaam). Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "They contained monitions only, such as 'I am astonished by one who finds pleasures in anything in spite of his faith in the certainty of death.' (Naturally when a person becomes sure of his sentence of hanging, and mounting the gallows, he can never find pleasure in anything). 'I am astonished by one who laughs in spite of his faith in certainty of death'. 'I am astonished by one who observes accidents, changes and revolutions of the world all the time, and still finds satisfaction in it.' 'I am astonished by one who believes in predestination, still suffers from grief and hardship.' 'I am astonished by one who believes that he will soon be required to render an account and still does no good deed."

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) goes on saying that he asked for more advice. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) advised that he should cultivate fear of Allah, because it is the root and basis of all spiritual actions. Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) then begged for more advice. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Be consistent in recitation of Qur'an and remembrance of Allah, because it is a noor in this world and a provision in Heaven." Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) again sought further advice and was told, "Abstain from too

much of laughter, because it causes the heart to wither, and the face loses its lustre." (Too much of laughter is injurious both for the outward and inward disposition of man.)

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) sought further advice, whereupon Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Stick to jihaad because this is the rahbaaniyyat of my ummat." (Rahbaan – singular raahib – were those people of previous ummats who severed all their worldly connections and turned towards Allah.)

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) asked for more advice and Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Associate yourself with the poor and the needy, be friendly with them and sit in their company." When Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) requested further advice, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Look towards those who rank below you (so that you may get used to being thankful) and do not look at those who rank above you, lest you should despise the favours of Allah upon you."

When Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) again asked for more advice, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Let your own faults prevent you from criticizing others and do not try to find fault with others, because you commit those faults yourself. It is enough to prove you guilty that you should find in others such faults as you yourself possess, though you may not be aware of them, and that you should find in others such misdeeds as you yourself commit." After this, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) patted the chest of Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) with his loving hand and said, "O, Abu Zar! there is no wisdom better than prudence, nor any piety better than refraining from the unlawful, nor any nobility better than polite manners."

(In stating the contents of this long hadith, the gist and meaning has been kept in view, in preference to the literal translation.)

HADITH-22

(٢٢) عَنْ اَبِیْ هُرَیْرَةَ رَضِیَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ اَنَّ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ ﷺ قَالَ مَااجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِیْ بَیْتٍ مِنْ بُیُوتِ اللّٰهِ یَتْلُوْنَ كِتَابَ اللّٰهِ وَیَتَدَارَسُوْنَهُ بَیْنَهُمْ اِلَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَیْهِمُ السَّكِیْنَةُ وَغَشِیَتْهُمُ الرَّحْمَةُ وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلٰئِكَةُ وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فِیْمَنْ عِنْدَهٗ (رواه مسلم وأبوداود)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Never do a people collect in one of the houses of Allah (mosque) reciting the Qur'an and reading it out to one another, but sakeenah (tranquillity) descends upon them, rahmat (mercy) enshrouds them, the angels throng around them and Almighty Allah mentions them, in the assembly of angels."

This hadith describes the special virtues of religious schools and institutions. Acquisition of either reward mentioned above is so sublime that even if one devotes his whole life to acquire it, it will be worth while. But here there are so many rewards, especially the last one. Mention in the Court of Almighty Allah and remembrance in the company of the beloved are bounties that can hardly be surpassed.

Descending of sakeenah has been mentioned in many ahadith. The scholars of ahadith have interpreted its real significance in many ways. The various interpretations, however, do not contradict each other and can be meaningfully put together.

Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) has interpreted sakeenah as a special breeze, which has a face like that of a human being.

Allamah Suddi (Rahmatullah alaih) is reported to have said that it is the name of a large golden dish in Paradise used for washing the hearts of the Prophets (Alaihimus salam) (peace be upon them).

Some have said that it is a special form of mercy.

Tabari (Rahmatullah alaih) prefers the view that it means peace of heart. Some interpret it as grace, others consider it as dignity, and some take it to mean angels. There are other views as well. Hafiz has written in 'Fat-hul Baari' that sakeena includes all the above mentioned blessings. In the opinion of Nawawi (Rahmatullah alaih), it is a combination of tranquility, mercy, etc., and descends along with the angels. It is mentioned in the Qur'an as follows:

فَأَنْزَلَ اللهُ سَكِيْنَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ

Then Allah caused His sakeenah to descend upon him.

هُوَ الَّذِىْ اَنْزَلَ السَّكِيْنَةَ فِىْ قُلُوْبِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

It is He Who sent down sakeenah into the hearts of the believers (XLVIII: 4).

فِيْهِ سَكِيْنَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ

Wherein is sakeenah from your Lord (II : 248).

Thus this happy blessing is mentioned in several ayaat of the Qur'an, and there are many ahadith containing tidings of this.

It is narrated in 'Ihya' that once Ibn Thauban (Radhiyallaho anho) had promised one of his relatives that he would break his fast with him, but reached the house of his relative next morning. When the host complained about the guest being so late, the guest said, "But for the promise that I owe you, I would never disclose what prevented me from coming to you. I just got late by chance until it was time of Ishaa salaat. I thought I should complete my Witr (compulsory salaat of three raka'at following Isha) as well, lest I should die during the night without offering this salaat, because there can be no surety against death. While I was reciting qunoot (a special invocation in Witr salaat), I saw a green garden of Paradise, which had all sorts of flowers. I was so absorbed in the vision that it was dawn." There have been hundreds of similar incidents in the lives of our righteous ancestors. Such things are, however, experienced only when there is complete separation from everyone besides Allah, and perfect attention towards Him.

Similarly there are many ahadith mentioning enshrouding by the angels. A detailed story about Usaid ibn Hudhair (Radhiyallaho anho) is given in the books of Hadith. It is said that while he was reciting the Holy Qur'an, he felt a sort of cloud spread over himself. The Prophet (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) informed him that these were angels who had gathered to listen to the recitation of the Qur'an. Due to their great throng they appeared like a cloud.

Once a Sahabi felt a sort of cloud over himself. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) told him that it was sakeenah, which was sent down by reason of the recitation of the Qur'an.

In Muslim Sharif, this hadith is given in greater detail. The concluding sentence is–

مَنْ بَطَّأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ

One whose evil deeds drive him away from the mercy of Allah, the superiority of his lineage or nobility of his family cannot bring him near it.

Thus a person who has a continuous noble pedigree, but indulges in disobedience and impiety, cannot be equal in the presence of Allah to a Muslim who is of low birth and abject in humility, but otherwise God-fearing and devout.

اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ اَتْقَاكُمْ

Verily the noblest of you in the view of Allah is the one who is most God-fearing.

HADITH–23

(٢٣) عَنْ اَبِىْ ذَرٍّ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ اِنَّكُمْ لَاتَرْجِعُوْنَ اِلَى اللهِ بِشَيْءٍ اَفْضَلَ مِمَّا خَرَجَ مِنْهُ يَعْنِى الْقُرْآنَ (رواه الحاكم وصححه أبوداود فى مراسيله عن جبير بن نفير والترمذى عن أبى أمامة بمعناه)

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "You cannot turn to Allah and gain nearness to Him with anything superior to that which directly proceeded from Him, i.e., the Holy Qur'an."

It is evident from numerous ahadith that there is no better means of seeking nearness to the presence of Allah than recitation of the Qur'an. Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal (Rahmatullah alaih) says, "I saw Almighty Allah in a dream and asked Him what was the best means for seeking nearness to His presence. Allah said, 'O, Ahmad! It is My Word (i.e. the Qur'an).' I enquired whether it is only reading while understanding the meaning, or reading without understanding. Allah said 'Whether by understanding the meaning or without understanding, it is a means of nearness either way.'"

That the reading of the Qur'an is the best means of getting access to Almighty Allah is explained in the commentary of Maulana Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlavi (Nawwarallaho marqadahu), who is an authority for the prosterity. Its substance is that sulook ilallaah (the path of mystics towards Allah) which is also called the stage of Ihsaan can be attained in three ways:–

(1) 'Tasawwur', known as meditation in Sharee'at and muraqabah in the terminology of mystics.

(2) Remembrance of Allah by repeating words of praise for Him.

(3) Reading of the Holy Qur'an.

Since the first method is remembrance in the heart, so there remain in fact two ways only; first the remembrance by heart or by word of mouth, and secondly recitation of the Qur'an. The essence of zikr is that the word which is used for or refers to Almighty Allah should be repeated over and over again. This repetition helps the mudrakah (the faculty of understanding) in concentrating upon the person of the one being remembered. It would give rise to a feeling of immediate presence of that person. Constancy in this state is called 'ma'iyyat' (togetherness), which is referred to in the hadith below:

لَايَزَالُ عَبْدِىْ يَتَقَرَّبُ اِلَىَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتّٰى اَحْبَبْتُهُ فَكُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِىْ يَسْمَعُ بِهٖ وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِىْ يَبْصُرُ بِهٖ وَيَدَهُ الَّتِىْ يَبْطِشُ بِهَا

My servant ceases not to seek nearness to Me through nafil (optional) deeds, until I make him My favourite, and thus I become his ears wherewith he hears, his eyes wherewith he sees, and his hands wherewith he holds, and his feet wherewith he walks.

It means that when a person, through excessive devotion becomes a favourite of Allah, Allah becomes a guardian of all the limbs of his body so that his eyes, ears, etc., all submit to His will. This blessing is said to be the result of constancy in nafil salaat, because fard (obligatory) salaat are specified and do not admit of excess, while nearness and close attachment demand constancy and concentration, as mentioned above.

But this mode of seeking nearness is exclusive for that

Pure and Beloved Being (Allah), and it is impossible to seek nearness to anybody else by remembering his name over and over again. This is because the one whose nearness is being sought must have two attributes. First, he should be omniscient, so that he comprehends the zikr of all the zaakireen, whether by word of mouth or by heart, irrespective of language, time and place. Secondly, he should have the power to illumine the understanding and fulfil the yearning of one who remembers, which is known as 'dunuww' (nearness), 'tadalli' (proximity), 'nuzul' (descent) and 'qurb' (nearness). Since these two prerequisites are possessed only by Allah, the abovementioned method of seeking nearness is effective only in respect of Him. The following hadith-e-qudsi (a revelation of Allah quoted by Rasulullah Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), points to this fact:

مَنْ تَقَرَّبَ اِلَیَّ شِبْرًا تَقَرَّبْتُ اِلَيْهِ ذِرَاعًا

> Whoever comes near Me by one span, I go near him by an arm's length; whoever comes near Me by one arm's length, I go near him by one 'baah' (stretch of both arms); whoever comes to Me walking, I go towards him running.

This similitude is only for illustration. Otherwise, Allah is above walking and running. It only means that those who remember and seek Him are helped and looked after by Almighty Allah in a measure far in excess of their own inner urge and efforts. This is so, because it behoves His Benevolence. So, the steadfastness of those who remember Him invokes constant attention and results in the descent of favours of Almighty Allah, the Glorious. The Qur'an altogether is zikr of Allah, in the sense that no ayat of the Qur'an is devoid of remembrance and attention towards Allah, and as such it bears characteristics of zikr as mentioned above. There is, however, another distinction of the Qur'an, which is the cause of increased nearness to Allah. And it is this: that every discourse carries the qualities and influencing traits of the speaker. It is obvious that recitation of the poetry of sinful and wicked people has its evil effects, while the verses of righteous people excercise a noble influence. It is for this reason that excessive study of knowledge of logic and philosophy produces pride and conceit, while excessive devotion to the study of hadith leads to humility. Although as languages, both English and

Persian are equal, they produce varying influences upon the readers due to the divergence in the beliefs and attitudes of the various authors. It can be concluded that repeated recitation of the Qur'an will result in the reader's being influenced by the qualities of the Originator of the verses and in developing a natural affinity for them. Moreover, if a person is devoted to the publications of an author, he naturally starts liking and favouring that person. In the same way, the reader of the Qur'an is sure to win Allah's abundant grace, which in turn promotes nearness to Him. May Allah bless us all with His favours.

HADITH–24

(٢٤) عَنْ اَنَسٍ رَضِیَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ اِنَّ لِلّٰهِ اَهْلِيْنَ مِنَ النَّاسِ قَالُوْا مَنْ هُمْ يَارَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ قَالَ اَهْلُ الْقُرْآنِ هُمْ اَهْلُ اللّٰهِ وَخَاصَّتُهُ (رواه النسائى وابن ماجه والحاكم وأحمد)

> Hadhrat Anas (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "For Allah, from amongst the people, there are some who are those of His household." The Sahabah (Radhiyallaho anhum) (may Allah be pleased with them) asked, "Who are those people?" He replied "Men of the Qur'an. They are of the household of Allah, and are his favoured ones."

"Men of the Qur'an are those who always remain occupied with the Qur'an and have got a special attachment to it. That such people are of the household of Allah and His favourites is evident. It is, therefore, clear from the foregoing that, as long as such people always remain occupied with the Qur'an, special favours of Almighty Allah continue to be conferred upon them. Certainly those who live in constant company do become as one of the household. What a great honour it is to belong to His household, to be reckoned amongst the 'Men of Allah' and to become His favourites, with such little striving and endeavour. What sacrifices of comfort and money are not made by people for admittance to worldly courts or to be elected as members of an assembly. They flatter the voters and bear all sorts of humiliations; yet they consider all this worthwhile. But the endeavour for the Qur'an is considered as a waste of time and energy:

ببیں تفاوتِ رہ از کجاست تا بہ کجا

Look at the difference between the paths; what a great divergence!

HADITH–25

(٢٥) عَنْ اَبِیْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِیَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ مَااَذِنَ اللهُ لِشَیْءٍ مَااَذِنَ لِنَبِیٍّ يَتَغَنّٰى بِالْقُرْآنِ (رواه البخارى ومسلم)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Almighty Allah never gives attention so much to anything as He does to the voice of a Prophet reading the Qur'an in a sweet tone."

It has been mentioned earlier that Almighty Allah devotes special attention to the recitation of Qur'an, which is His own Word. Since Prophets meticulously observe all the rules of reverence in reading the Qur'an, Allah's listening to them with greater attention is evident. And the sweetness of voice itself adds to the embellishment. As for people other than Prophets, their recitation attracts Divine attention according to the standard of its excellence.

HADITH–26

(٢٦) عَنْ فُضَالَةَ بْنِ عُبَيْدٍ رَضِیَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ اَللهُ اَشَدُّ اُذُنًا اِلٰى قَارِئِ الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ صَاحِبِ الْقَيْنَةِ اِلٰى قَيْنَتِهٖ (رواه ابن ماجه، وابن حبان والحاكم كذا فى شرح الأحياء قلت وقال الحاكم صحيح على شرطهما وقال الذهبى منقطع)

Hadhrat Fudhaalah Ibn Ubaid (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Almighty Allah listens to the voice of the reader of the Qur'an more eagerly than does a master to the song of his singing slave girl."

It is natural that singing should attract attention. But religious people do not listen to singing because of the restriction in Islam. However, Islam does not prohibit listening to the song of a slave woman in one's lawful possession, even though, this may attract the fullest attention.

It is, however, necessary that the Qur'an shall not be recited in a singing tone, because doing so is forbidden according to several ahadith. In one hadith it is said:

اِيَّاكُمْ وَلُحُوْنِ اَهْلِ الْعِشْقِ

Beware of reciting the Qur'an in a musical tone, like that of lovers singing their love poems as musical compositions.

The mashaa'ikh say that one who reads the Glorious Qur'an like a musical song is a faasiq (evil-doer), and even a listener to such recitation commits a sin. It is, however, desirable to recite the Qur'an in a sweet voice without following the rules of singing. There are various ahadith containing exhortation for reading the Qur'an in a sweet voice. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has said at one place, "Adorn the Qur'an with a good voice." In another hadith it is said, "A sweet voice makes the beauty of the Qur'an twice as beautiful."

Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Qaadir Jilani (Rahmatullah alaih) has written in his book 'Ghunyah that once Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) happened to pass a place in the vicinity of Kufa and saw a gathering of evil-doers in a house. A singer named Zaazaan was singing and playing his instrument. On hearing his voice, Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) said, "What a sweet voice, only if it were used for reciting the Glorious Qur'an," and thus saying he covered his head with a piece of cloth and went his way. Zaazaan had seen him saying something. On enquiring from the people, he came to know that Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) was a Sahabi who had passed saying those words. Zaazaan got very much perturbed by that remark and, to cut the story short, he broke all his musical instruments and became a follower of Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) and thereafter rose to the position of a distinguished scholar of his time.

There are various ahadith that commend reading of the Holy Qur'an in a good voice and at the same time prohibit reading it in a voice resembling singing, as has been stated before.

Hadhrat Huzaifah (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Recite the Qur'an in the Arabic accent, do not recite it in the tone of lovers or in the voice of Jews and Christians. There will shortly arise a people who will recite the Qur'an with affectation like singers and mourners, and such reading will be of no advantage to them at all. They themselves will get into trouble, and so also those who admire their reading."

Taa'oos (Rahmatullah alaih) writes that someone asked Rasulullah (Sallalaho alaihe wasallam) "Who it was who read the Glorious Qur'an in the best voice?" Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied, "It is he whom you hear and feel that he is under the fear of Allah, i.e., his voice shows his being overwhelmed with fear." This is, however, the extreme benevolence of Allah that He does not expect from a person anything beyond his capacity. There is a hadith that Allah has deputed an angel on a special duty. If there be somebody who recites the Qur'an, but is unable to do so as correctly, as it should be done, this angel corrects his recitation before he takes it up to the Heavens."

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَا اُحْصِیْ ثَنَاءً عَلَیْكَ

"Oh, Allah! I cannot enumerate the praises due to Thee.

HADITH–27

(۲۷) عَنْ عُبَيْدَةَ الْمُلَيْكِيِّ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ يَااَهْلَ الْقُرْآنِ لَاتَتَوَسَّدُوْا الْقُرْآنَ وَاتْلُوْهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ مِنْ اٰنَآءِ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَاَفْشُوْهُ وَتَغَنَّوْهُ وَتَدَبَّرُوْا مَافِيْهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ وَلَاتَعْجَلُوْا ثَوَابَهُ فَاِنَّ لَهُ ثَوَابًا

(رواه البيهقى فى شعب الإيمان)

Hadhrat Ubaidah Mulaiki (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "O, you devotees of the Qur'an! do not use the Qur'an as a pillow, but read it properly day and night, as it ought to be read. Propagate the Holy Qur'an, read it in a good voice and ponder over its contents, so that you may succeed. Do not seek a reward for it (in this life), because it has got a magnificent reward (in the Hereafter)."

A few points in this hadith are as follows:

(1) It is said that the Qur'an should not be used as a pillow. Doing so is an act of disrespect towards the Holy Book. It has been written by Ibn Hajar (Rahmatullah alaih) that using the Qur'an as a pillow, stretching one's feet towards it, and trampling over it, are acts which are all forbidden. Secondly, the expression "using as a pillow" also implies showing neglect towards the Holy Qur'an. It serves no purpose to place it on a pillow, as it is sometimes found placed on a stand by the side of a grave in a shrine for barakah (blessings). This is utter disregard of the Holy Book. We owe it to the Holy Book that it should be read.

(2) The expression "Read it as it ought to be read" means that it should be read with the highest degree of reverence. Commandment to this effect is there in the Qur'an itself.

اَلَّذِیْنَ اٰتَیْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ یَتْلُوْنَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ

Those to whom We have given the Book, read it as it ought to be read.

The orders of a king are received with great respect, and a letter from the beloved is read with great fondness; similarly the Qur'an sould be read with great respect and fondness.

(3) The expression "propagate the Qur'an" means that we should do so by speech, by writing, by persuasion, by practising and by all other possible means.

Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) ordered its propagation and spreading, but some of our bright thinkers consider it a vain task, and at the same time they claim that they have great love for Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) and for Islam.

According to a Persian verse:

ترسم نہ رسی بکعبہ اے اعرابی
کیں رہ کہ تو می روی بترکستان است

I am afraid, O, Bedouin! you can never reach Ka'bah.
Because the path you are following leads to Turkistan.

Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has ordered spreading of the Qur'an, but we do not hesitate to put all sorts of hurdles in the way of its propagation. We make laws for compulsory secular education so that children, instead of learning the Qur'an, are forced to join primary schools. We are displeased with teachers in religious schools for spoiling the lives of children, and, therefore, we do not send our children to them. Even if this apprehension is correct, it does not absolve us of our responsibility. On the other hand, our responsibility becomes even greater because we are all duty-bound, individually and collectively, to propagate the Qur'an. The religious teacher is, no doubt, responsible for his shortcomings, but if, because of his defects, we prevent children from going to religious schools, get notices issued to their parents in the name of compulsory primary education, compelling them to deprive their children of learning the Qur'an, then this is like killing a tuberculosis patient by giving him poison. An attempt to justify our hostile conduct by the supposed omission on the part of the religious teacher is a lame excuse, and this argument will not avail in the court of Almighty Allah. We may consider it necessary to educate our children in subjects like elementary arithmetic, to make them fit for running a petty grocery shop or for getting employment with the country's rulers, but according to Almighty Allah the learning of the Qur'an is the most important.

(4) That recitation should be in a sweet voice has already been explained under the previous hadith.

(5) We are required to ponder over the meaning of the Qur'an. There is a quotation from the Torah in 'Ihya', in which Allah says, "My servant! are you not ashamed of your behaviour towards Me? If you receive a letter from a friend while you are going on a road you stop and sit at a suitable place and read it with full attention and try to understand every word therein. But in case of My Book, wherein I have explained everything and have repeatedly emphasized important matters, so that you may ponder over and understand them, you show an attitude of indifference. Do you consider Me inferior to your friend even? O, My servant! some of your friends sit with you and talk to you; you pay them full attention. You listen to them and try to understand them. If anybody tries to interrupt you, you stop him with a gesture. I talk to you through My Book, but you pay no heed. Do you consider Me inferior to your friends?" The merits of meditation and contemplation on the contents of the Qur'an have already been mentioned in the Foreword of this book and again under hadith 8.

The expression "do not seek prompt reward" means that no wages should be accepted for reciting the Qur'an, because your recitation is going to fetch you a great reward in the Hereafter.

To accept reward for it in this life is just like being content with shells instead of money. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "When my Ummat will attach more value to money, it will lose the dignity which Islam confers on it, and when it will give up enjoining good and forbidding evil, it will be deprived of the blessings of Divine Revelation, viz., the understanding of the Qur'an."

اَللّٰهُمَّ احْفَظْنَا مِنْهُ

O, Allah! guard us against this.

HADITH-28

(٢٨) عَنْ وَاثِلَةَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ رَفَعَهُ اُعْطِيْتُ مَكَانَ التَّوْرَاةِ السَّبْعَ وَاُعْطِيْتُ مَكَانَ الزَّبُوْرِ الْمِئِيْنَ وَاُعْطِيْتُ مَكَانَ الْاِنْجِيْلِ اَلْمَثَانِىَ وَفُضِّلْتُ بِالْمُفَصَّلِ

(لأحمد والكبير كذا فى جمع الفوائد)

Hadhrat Waathilah (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "I have been given 'as-Sab'ut Tuwal' in lieu of the Torah, 'al-Mi'een' in lieu of the Psalms, 'al-Mathaani' in lieu of the Bible and al-Mufassal as a special favour to me."

The first seven surahs are called 'as-Sab'ut Tuwal' (the seven longest ones); the next eleven are called 'al-Mi'een' (surahs consisting of about a hundred ayaat each); the fol-

lowing twenty surahs are known as 'al-Mathaani' (the oft-repeated ones), while all the remaining surahs are called 'al-Mufassal' (the explicit ones). This division is according to a popular interpretation, but there is some difference of opinion as to whether a certain surah is included in 'as-Sab'ut Tuwal' or 'al-Mi'een'. Similarly there is a disagreement as to whether a surah falls under 'al-Mathaani' or 'al-Mufassal'. But this disagreement does not affect the meaning or purpose of this hadith. This hadith shows that the Holy Qur'aan contains the equivalents of all the important Heavenly Books that had been revealed earlier, and moreover contains 'al-Mufassal' as a special addition, the like of which is not to be found in the earlier books.

HADITH—29

(٢٩) عَنْ اَبِىْ سَعِيْدِ نِ الْخُدْرِىِّ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ جَلَسْتُ فِىْ عِصَابَةٍ مِّنْ ضُعَفَآءِ الْمُهَاجِرِيْنَ وَاِنَّ بَعْضَهُمْ لَيَسْتَتِرُ بِبَعْضٍ مِّنَ الْعُرىٰ وَقَارِىءٌ يَّقْرَأُ عَلَيْنَا اِذْ جَاءَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ فَقَامَ عَلَيْنَا فَلَمَّا قَامَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ سَكَتَ الْقَارِئُ فَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ قَالَ مَاكُنْتُمْ تَصْنَعُوْنَ قُلْنَا نَسْتَمِعُ اِلٰى كِتَابِ اللهِ تَعَالٰى فَقَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْ جَعَلَ مِنْ اُمَّتِىْ مَنْ اُمِرْتُ اَنْ اَصْبِرَ نَفْسِىْ مَعَهُمْ قَالَ فَجَلَسَ وَسْطَنَا لِيَعْدِلَ بِنَفْسِهِ فِيْنَا ثُمَّ قَالَ بِيَدِهِ هٰكَذَا فَتَحَلَّقُوْا وَبَرَزَتْ وَجُوْهُهُمْ لَهُ فَقَالَ اَبْشِرُوْا يَامَعْشَرَ صَعَالِيْكِ الْمُهَاجِرِيْنَ بِالنُّوْرِ التَّامِّ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ تَدْخُلُوْنَ الْجَنَّةَ قَبْلَ اَغْنِيَآءِ النَّاسِ بِنِصْفِ يَوْمٍ وَذٰلِكَ خَمْسُ مِاْةِ سَنَةٍ (رواه أبوداود)

Hadhrat Abu Sa'eed Khudri (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates:

"Once I was sitting with a group of indigent muhajireen, who did not even have sufficient clothes to cover their whole body and as such some of them were hiding themselves behind others. A qaari (one who is well versed in reciting the Qur'an) was reciting the Glorious Qur'an. Suddenly Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) came and stood near us. On his arrival the reader stopped reciting. He invoked peace upon us, and asked us what we had been doing. We replied that we had been listening to the Holy Qur'an. Then

Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "All praise is for Allah, Who created such people in my Ummat that I have been ordered to stay with them.' Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) sat in our midst so as to be equidistant from all of us. Then he asked all of us to get closer to him. All of us sat with our faces towards him. Thereafter, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, 'O, you poor muhajireen, I give you glad tidings of perfect noor on the Day of Judgement, and you shall enter Paradise before wealthy people by half a day, and this half day will be equal to five hundred years."

That muhajireen did not even have sufficient clothes to cover their whole body apparently refers to the exposure of that part of the body which it is not obligatory to cover. But in public one feels shy at the exposure of even such parts. This is the reason why they were sitting behind one another.

They did not become aware of the arrival of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) as he came, because of their pre-occupation. They saw him when he had come very near to them and then, out of respect, the reader stopped reading.

Although Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) had seen one of them reading the Qur'an, he inquired about what they had been doing. This enquiry was to express his pleasure over what he had seen them doing.

One day in the next life will be equal to one thousand years of this world, as is given in the Holy Qur'an:

وَاِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَاَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّوْنَ

"Lo! a day with your Lord is as a thousand years of that ye reckon."

This is the reason why the Arabic word (غدًا) (ghadan) (tomorrow) is generally used while referring to the Day of Judgement. Even this will be the probable length of a day for the believers in general. As for the disbelievers, the Qur'an says that:

فِىْ يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِيْنَ اَلْفَ سَنَةٍ

"A day will be equal to fifty thousand years."

For true believers, this day will be shorter according to their status. It is reported that, for some true believers, it will be like the time spent in two rakaat of Fajr salaat.

The merits of reading the Qur'an are given in many ahadith. Similarly, the merits of listening to the Qur'an are also found in numerous ahadith. The act of listening to the recitation of the Qur'an is so virtuous that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) had been ordered to stay among those engaged in reading the Qur'an, as given in this hadith. Some learned scholars are of the opinion that listening to the Qur'an is more virtuous than reading it, because reading the Qur'an is nafl and listening fard, and fard act is always better than a nafl one.

From this hadith there is one more deduction, in respect of which the learned scholars differ in their opinion. There is disagreement as to whether a destitute but steadfast person, who conceals his poverty from others is better, or a wealthy person who is grateful to Allah and discharges his obligations. This hadith provides an argument in favour of the destitute one who is steadfast.

HADITH—30

(٣٠) عَنْ اَبِىْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ مَنِ اسْتَمَعَ اِلٰى اٰيَةٍ مِّنْ كِتَابِ اللّٰهِ كُتِبَتْ لَهُ حَسَنَةٌ مُّضَاعَفَةٌ وَمَنْ تَلَاهَا كَانَتْ لَهُ نُوْرٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ (رواه أحمد عن عبادة بن ميسرة واختلف فى توثيقه عن الحسن عن أبى هريرة والجمهور على أن الحسن لم يسمع عن أبى هريرة)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever listens to one ayat of the Holy Qur'an, there is written for him a twofold virtue, and whoever recites it (one ayat), it shall be noor for him on the Day of Judgement."

The scholars of hadith have questioned the above hadith with respect to its authority, but its subject-matter is also affirmed by various other traditions to the effect that even listening to the recitation of the Holy Qur'an carries great reward, so much so that according to some scholars, listening to the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an is more virtuous than its reading. Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that once Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), while sitting on the mimbar (pulpit), said to him, "Recite the Qur'an for me." Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) said, "It does not behove me to read out the Qur'an to you, because it is you to whom it was revealed." Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "It is my heart's desire to listen." Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) adds that when he recited the Qur'an, tears started flowing from the eyes of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam). Once Saalim (Radhiyallaho anho), the freed slave of Huzaifah (Radhiyallaho anho) was reciting the Glorious Qur'an and Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) stood by, listening to him for a long time. Once Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) listened to recitation of the Glorious Qur'an by Abu Musa Ash'ari (Radhiyallaho anho) and admired his reading.

HADITH—31

(٣١) عَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ اَلْجَاهِرُ بِالْقُرْآنِ كَالْجَاهِرِ بِالصَّدَقَةِ وَالْمُسِرُّ بِالْقُرْآنِ كَالْمُسِرِّ بِالصَّدَقَةِ (رواه الترمذى وأبوداود والنسائى والحاكم وقال على شرط البخارى)

Hadhrat 'Uqbah ibn Aamir (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "One reading the Qur'an loudly is like one who gives alms openly, and one who reads silently is like one who gives alms secretly."

Sometimes it is more rewarding to give alms openly, when there is some good reason and the intention is to induce others by example. At other times, giving alms secretly is more virtuous, for instance, when the intention is to avoid show on one's own part or to save the recipient from humiliation.

In the same way, recitation of the Qur'an in a loud voice carries more reward when the intention is to induce others; besides, in this there is reward also for those who listen. At times it would be preferable to read silently, so as to avoid inconvenience to others or show on one's part. Thus the reading, either way, has independent virtue. Sometimes one mode is preferable, and sometimes the other.

Many people have argued on the basis of this hadith that reading in a low voice is more virtuous. Imam Baihaqi (Rahmatullah alaih) in his book, 'Kitabush Shu'ab', has written that Hadhrat 'Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaho anha) had reported that the reward of doing a good act secretly is seventy times more than that of doing it openly. But, according to the rules laid down by the muhadditheen (scholars of ahadith), this hadith is dha'eef (weak).

Hadhrat Jaabir (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Do not read in a loud voice, lest the voice of one should get mixed up with the other." Hadhrat Umar ibn Abdul Aziz (Radhiyallaho anho) found a person reading the Qur'an in a loud voice in Musjid-i-Nabawi and had stopped him. The reader, however, tried to argue, whereupon Hadhrat 'Umar ibn Abdul Aziz (Radhiyallaho anho) said, "If you read for the sake of Allah, read in a low voice and, if you read for the sake of men, then such reading is of no use."

Similarly an advice of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), for reading the Qur'an in a loud voice, has also been reported.

'Sharhul Ihya' contains both 'riwaayaat' (Plural of 'riwayat—Narrative tradition) and 'aathaar' (sayings of Sahabah) urging the reading of the Glorious Qur'an in a loud as well as in a low voice.

HADITH—32

(٣٢) عَنْ جَابِرٍ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِىِّ ﷺ اَلْقُرْآنُ شَافِعٌ مُّشَفَّعٌ وَّمَاحِلٌ مُصَدَّقٌ مَنْ جَعَلَهُ اَمَامَهُ قَادَهُ اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَمَنْ جَعَلَهُ خَلْفَ ظَهْرِهِ سَاقَطَهُ اِلَى النَّارِ

(رواه ابن حبان والحاكم مطولا وصححه)

Hadhrat Jaabir (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "The Qur'an is such an interceder whose intercession is accepted, and a disputant whose dispute is upheld. Whoever keeps it in front of him, it draws him to Paradise, and whoever puts it behind his back, it hurls him into Hell."

This means that, if the Qur'an intercedes on behalf of anybody, its intercession is accepted by Almighty Allah.

The meaning of the "pleading of the Glorious Qur'an" has already been explained under hadith 8. The Qur'an pleads in the Court of Allah for increasing the status of those who abide by it, and takes to task those who neglect it. If one keeps it in front of him, i.e., follows it and acts upon its commands throughout his life, it leads him to Paradise. And if one turns his back towards it, i.e., does not follow it, he will, no doubt, fall into the pit of Hell. According to the author, indifference to the Qur'an can also amount to putting it behind the back. In many ahadith there are several warnings for those who neglect the Word of Allah. In the book of Sahihul Bukhari' there is a long hadith, according to which Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) was once made by Almighty Allah to view some of the punishments given to the sinful ones. He was shown a person on whose head a stone was being struck with such force that the head was crushed. On the enquiry of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) it was said that Allah had taught His Glorious Word to that person, but he neither recited it during the night nor acted upon it during the day, so now this treatment for him will continue till the Day of Judgement. May Allah through His grace save us from His chastisement. In fact, the Holy Qur'an is such a great blessing that any indifference to it certainly deserves the severest punishment.

HADITH—33

(٣٣) عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ اَلصِّيَامُ وَالْقُرْآنُ يَشْفَعَانِ لِلْعَبْدِ يَقُوْلُ الصِّيَامُ رَبِّ اِنِّىْ مَنَعْتُهُ الطَّعَامَ وَالشَّرَابَ فِى النَّهَارِ فَشَفِّعْنِىْ فِيْهِ وَيَقُوْلُ الْقُرْآنُ رَبِّ مَنَعْتُهُ النَّوْمَ بِاللَّيْلِ فَشَفِّعْنِىْ فِيْهِ فَيُشَفَّعَانِ

(رواه أحمد وابن أبى الدنيا والطبرانى فى الكبير والحاكم وقال صحيح على شرط مسلم)

Hadhrat 'Abdullah ibn Amr (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "The sowm (fast) and the Qur'an both intercede for the obedient person. The fast submits, 'O Allah! I prevented him from eating and drinking during the day, so You accept my intercession on his behalf, and the Holy Qur'an says, 'O, Allah! I denied him sleep at night, so You accept my intercession for him.' Consequently, the intercession of both of them is accepted."

In the book 'Targhib', the hadith mentions the words

'ta'aam' and 'sharaab' i.e. food and drink, as translated above, but in the book of Haakim we find the word 'shahawaat' (passions) in place of 'sharaab', i.e. fasting prevented a person from eating and indulging in his passions. It is implied here that one should abstain even from such acts of physical pleasure which are permissible e.g. kissing and embracing (one's own wife). It is given in some ahadith that the Holy Qur'an will appear in the semblance of a youth and will say, "It is I who kept you awake during the night and thirsty during the day."

This hadith implies that a hafiz should recite the Qur'an in nafl salaat at night, as explained already in detail under hadith 27. In the Holy Qur'an itself at various places there are encouragements to this effect. Some verses are given below:

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ

(1) And keep awake some part of the night for reciting it in Tahajjud salaat.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيْلًا

(2) And worship Him in a portion of the night and glorify Him during the long night.

يَتْلُوْنَ اٰيَاتِ اللّٰهِ اٰنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُوْنَ

(3) They recite verses revealed by Allah during the night and they fall in sajdah (prostration) before Him.

وَالَّذِيْنَ يَبِيْتُوْنَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَّقِيَامًا

(4) And who spend the night before their Lord, prostrate and standing.

Consequently, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) and his Sahabah (Radhiyallaho anhum) sometimes spent the whole night in reciting the Holy Qur'an. It is reported about Hadhrat 'Uthman (Radhiyallaho anho) that sometimes he recited the whole of Qur'an in a single rak'at of his Witr salaat. In the same way, 'Abdullah ibn Zubair (Radhiyallaho anho) used to recite the whole Qur'an in a single night. Sa'eed ibn Jubair (Rahmatullah alaih) read out

the whole Qur'an in two rakaats inside the Ka'bah. Thabit Banaani (Rahmatullah alaih) used to read out the whole Qur'an in one day and night, and so was also the case with Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho). Abu Shaikh Hannaa'i (Rahmatullah alaih) said, "I read the whole Qur'an twice, and ten parts in addition, in a single night. If I wanted, I could have completed the third reading as well." In the course of his journey for the Haj pilgrimage, Salih ibn Kaisaan (Radhiyallaho anho) often used to complete two readings of the Qur'an each night. Mansoor ibn Zaazaan (Rahmatullah alaih) completed one reading during nafl salaat before noon, and the second reading in the interval between Zuhr (afternoon) and Asr (late afternoon) salaat, and he spent the whole night in offering nafl salat, weeping so much that the end of his turban would become wet. Similar had been the case with many others, as described by Muhammad ibn Nasr (Rahmatullah alaih) in his book 'Qiyaamul Lail'

It is written in 'Sharhul Ihya' that our ancestors in deen differed from one another in their practices of completing the reading of the whole Qur'an. Some of them completed one reading of the whole Qur'an every day, as was the practice of Imam Shaafi'ee (Rahmatullah alaih) in months other than Ramadhan; and some completed two readings everyday, as was also done by Imam Shaafi'ee (Rahmatullah alaih) during the month of Ramadhan. Such was also the practice of Aswad, Salih bin Kaisaan, Sa'eed bin Jubair and of many others. Some used to complete three readings every day. This was the practice of Sulaim ibn Atar, who was an eminent Taabi'ee (the follower of a Sahabi). He had taken part in the conquest of Egypt during the regime of Hadhrat 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho) and was also appointed ruler of Qasas by Hadhrat Ameer Mu'aawiyah (Radhiyallaho anho). He used to complete three readings of the whole Qur'an every night.

Imam Nawawi writes in 'Kitabul Azkar' that the maximum daily recitation reported is of Ibnul Kaatib who used to complete eight readings of the Holy Qur'an during each day and night. Ibn Quddamah has reported that, according to Imam Ahmad (Rahmatullah alaih), there is no limitation in this respect and that it entirely depends on the zest of the reader. Historians have stated that Imam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alaih) used to complete sixty-one readings in

the month of Ramadhan—once everyday, once everynight, and one reading was completed in Taraweeh salaat.

On the other hand, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has said that one who completes one reading of the Qur'an in less than three days cannot meditate upon it. For this reason, Ibn Hazm (Rahmatullah alaih) and some others are of the opinion that reading the whole Qur'an in less than three days is forbidden. According to the author, this hadith refers to the capacity of the readers in general, otherwise completion of one reading of the Holy Qur'an in less than three days by a group of Sahabah has been reported. Similarly, according to the opinion of the Jamhur (general body of 'ulama), there is no limitation on the maximum period in which one reading should be completed. The reading should be completed within such time as is convenient. But some 'ulama say that the maximum period should not exceed forty days. This means that at least three-fourth of a part should be read daily and if, for any reason, this much of reading is not done on any day, the missed portion should also be covered on the next day, so that the whole reading is completed within forty days. According to the consensus of opinion, this is not obligatory but, in view of the belief of some 'ulama, it is better that the daily reading should not be less than this. This view is supported by some ahadith. The author of Majma' has reported in one hadith:

مَنْ قَرَاَ الْقُرْآنَ فِىْ اَرْبَعِيْنَ لَيْلَةً فَقَدْ عَزَّبَ

Whoever completed the reading of the whole Qur'an in forty nights, delayed the matter.

Some 'ulama are of the opinion that the whole reading should be completed once every month, though it is preferable to complete one reading every week, as was the practice of the most of the Sahabah. One should start on Friday and read one manzil (halting stage) daily, thus to complete on Thursday. It has already been stated that, according to Imam Abu Hanifah (Rahmatullah alaih), we owe it to the Qur'an that it must be read at least twice a year. Therefore, under no circumstances should one do less than this.

There is a hadith according to which, if the reading of the whole Qur'an is completed in the beginning of the day, the angels invoke mercy for the reader throughout the rest of the day and for rest of a night if done in the beginning of the night. Some mashaa'ikh have, therefore, concluded that the reading of the whole Qur'an should be completed preferably in the early part of the day during the summer season and in the early part of the night during winter, so that the reader is benefited for a longer period by the prayers of the angels.

HADITH—34

(٣٤) عَنْ سَعِيْدِ بْنِ سُلَيْمٍ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ مُرْسَلًا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ مَامِنْ شَفِيْعٍ اَفْضَلُ مَنْزِلَةً عِنْدَ اللهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ لَانَبِيٌّ وَلَامَلَكٌ وَلَاغَيْرُهُ

(قال العراق رواه عبدالملك بن حبيب. كذا فى شرح الاحياء)

Hadhrat Sa'eed bin Sulaim (Radhiyallaho anho) has reported that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "On the Day of Judgement, before Allah, no other intercessor will have a greater status than the Qur'an, neither a Prophet nor an angel, etc."

It has been learnt from several other ahadith that the Holy Qur'an is an intercessor—such an intercessor whose intercession will be accepted. May Almighty Allah make the Qur'an intercede for us all, and may He not make it an opponent or a complainant against us.

In 'La'aali Masnoo'ah' it is reported from the riwaayat of Bazzaar, which is not considered as concocted, "When a man dies and his relatives are busy in funeral rites, there stands an extremely handsome man by his head. When the dead body is shrouded, that man gets in between the shroud and the chest of the deceased. When, after the burial, the people return home, two angels, Munkar and Nakeer (names of two special Angels), come in the grave and try to separate this handsome man so that they may be able to interrogate the dead man in privacy about his faith. But the handsome man says, "He is my companion, he is my friend. I will not leave him alone in any case. If you are appointed for interrogation, do your job. I cannot leave him until I get him admitted into Paradise." Thereafter he turns to his dead companion and says, "I am the Qur'an, which you used to read, sometimes in a loud voice and sometimes in a low voice. Do not worry. After the interrogation of Munkar and Nakeer, you will have no grief." When the interrogation is over, the handsome man arranges for him

from al-Mala'ul A'laa (the angels in Heaven) a silk bedding filled with musk. May Allah bestow this favour on all of us.

This hadith in its complete form contains a description of many virtues and has not been quoted in full for the sake of brevity.

HADITH–35

(٣٥) عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ اَنَّ رَسُوْلَ اللهِ ﷺ قَالَ مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَقَدْ اِسْتَدْرَجَ النُّبُوَّةَ بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْهِ غَيْرَ اَنَّهُ لَايُوْحٰى اِلَيْهِ لَايَنْبَغِىْ لِصَاحِبِ الْقُرْآنِ اَنْ يَّجِدَ مَعَ مَنْ وَّجَدَ وَلَا يَجْهَلَ مَعَ مَنْ جَهَلَ وَفِىْ جَوْفِهِ كَلَامُ اللهِ

(رواه الحاكم وقال صحيح الإسناد)

Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallalaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever reads the Qur'an secures the knowledge of prophethood within his ribs (bosom), though Divine Revelation is not sent upon him. It does not befit one endowed with the Qur'an that he should be indignant with those in anger, nor should he indulge in any act of ignorance with those who are ignorant, while the Qur'an is there in his bosom."

Since the chain of wahi (revelation) ended with Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), further wahi cannot come. But since the Qur'an is the Word of the Almighty Allah, it doubtlessly contains the knowledge of 'Nubuwwat (prophethood) and if anybody is blessed with this knowledge, it is incumbent upon him that he should display the best conduct, and should refrain from bad manners. Fudhail bin Iyaadh (Rahmatullah alaih) has stated that a hafiz of the Qur'an is a bearer of the banner of Islam, and as such it does not behove him to join those who indulge in frivolous pursuits, or associate with the neglectful, or mix with the indolent.

HADITH–36

(٣٦) عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ ثَلَاثَةٌ لَايَهُوْلُهُمُ الْفَزَعُ الْاَكْبَرُ وَلَا يَنَالُهُمُ الْحِسَابُ هُمْ عَلٰى كَثِيْبٍ مِّنْ مِّسْكٍ حَتّٰى يُفْرَغَ مِنْ حِسَابِ الْخَلَائِقِ رَجُلٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ اِبْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللهِ وَاَمَّ بِهِ قَوْمًا وَهُمْ بِهِ رَاضُوْنَ

وَدَاعٍ يَّدْعُوْ اِلَى الصَّلٰوٰتِ اِبْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللهِ وَرَجُلٌ اَحْسَنَ فِيْمَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ رَبِّهِ وَفِيْمَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ مَوَالِيْهِ (رواه الطبرانى فى المعاجم الثلاثة)

Hadhrat Ibn 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Three persons are such as will have no fear of the horrors of the Day of Judgement, nor will they be required to render any account. They will stroll merrily on mounds of musk until the people are relieved of rendering their account. One is a person who learnt the Qur'an, merely seeking Allah's pleasure and therewith leads people in salaat in a manner that they are pleased with him; the second person is one who invites men to salaat for the pleasure of Allah alone. The third person is one who has fair dealings between him and his master, as well as between himself and his subordinates."

The severity, the horror, the dread and the miseries of the Day of Judgement are so great that a true Muslim is neither unmindful nor unaware of them. To be relieved of those worries in any way, on the Day of Judgement, is a favour that surpasses thousands of blessings and millions of pleasures. Those who will then be made to relax and rejoice will be the fortunate ones indeed. Utter ruin and loss is the lot of those insensible persons who consider the reading of the Qur'an as useless and waste of time.

In 'Mu'jam Kabeer', it is written about this hadith that its reporter, Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (Radhiyallaho anho), who was a Sahabi of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "If I had not heard this hadith from Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) once, once again and once again (he repeated it seven times), I would never have reported it."

HADITH–37

(٣٧) عَنْ اَبِىْ ذَرٍّ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ يَااَبَاذَرٍّ لَاَنْ تَغْدُوَ فَتَعَلَّمَ آيَةً مِّنْ كِتَابِ اللهِ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنْ اَنْ تُصَلِّىَ مِائَةَ رَكْعَةٍ وَلَاَنْ تَغْدُوَ فَتَعَلَّمَ بَابًا مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ عُمِلَ بِهِ اَوْ لَمْ يُعْمَلْ بِهِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ اَنْ تُصَلِّىَ اَلْفَ رَكْعَةٍ

(رواه ابن ماجه بإسناد حسن)

Hadhrat Abu Zar (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "O, Abu Zar if you go in the morning and learn one ayat from the Book of Allah, it will be better for you than your offering one hundred rakaat of nafl salaat, and if you learn one chapter of knowledge, which may or may not be practised at that time will be better for you than your offering one thousand rakaat of nafl salaat.

It is mentioned in many ahadith that acquiring knowledge of religion is more virtuous than worship. There are so many traditions on the virtues of learning that they cannot all be mentioned here. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "The superiority of an aalim over an aabid (worshipper) is like my superiority over the lowest among you." He is also reported to have said that a single faqeeh (jurist) is harder against Satan than one thousand worshippers.

HADITH—38

(٣٨) عَنْ اَبِىْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ مَنْ قَرَأَ عَشْرَ آيَاتٍ فِىْ لَيْلَةٍ لَمْ يُكْتَبْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِيْنَ (رواه الحاكم وقال صحيح على شرط مسلم)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever recites ten ayaat in a night, is not reckoned amongst the neglectful."

It takes only a few minutes to recite ten ayaat. Doing so saves a man from being included in the list of the neglectful, for that night. It is really a great reward.

HADITH.—39

(٣٩) عَنْ اَبِىْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ مَنْ حَافَظَ عَلٰى هٰؤُلَاءِ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْمَكْتُوْبَاتِ لَمْ يُكْتَبْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِيْنَ وَمَنْ قَرَأَ فِىْ لَيْلَةٍ مِائَةَ آيَةٍ كُتِبَ مِنَ الْقَانِتِيْنَ (رواه ابن خزيمه فى صحيحه والحاكم وقال صحيح على شرطهما)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever remains steadfast in the five salaat will not be written amongst the neglectful; and whoever reads

one hundred ayaat in a night will be written among the qaaniteen (the obedient)."

Hadhrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alaih) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever reads one hundred ayaat in a night will be exempted from the demands of the Qur'an, and one who reads two hundred ayaat will get a reward for offering salaat throughout the night and one who recites five hundred to one thousand ayaat will get one qintaar. The Sahabah asked, "What is meant by a qintaar?" Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied, "It is equal to twelve thousand daraahim or danaaneer (Plural of dirham and deenaar, respectively—unit of currency used in Hijaaz in the Holy Prophet's (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) days)."

HADITH—40

(٤٠) عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ نَزَلَ جِبْرَئِيْلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِ اللهِ ﷺ فَاَخْبَرَهُ اَنَّهُ سَتَكُوْنُ فِتَنٌ قَالَ فَمَا الْمَخْرَجُ مِنْهَا يَاجِبْرَئِيْلُ قَالَ كِتَابُ اللهِ (رواه رزين كذا فى الرحمة المهداة)

Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho) has reported, "Hadhrat Jibra'eel (Alayhis salaam) once informed Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that many fitnahs will certainly appear. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) asked, 'What will be the way out, O, Jibra'eel?' He replied, 'The Book of Allah."

To act upon the Book of Allah serves as a safeguard against fitnahs, and its blessed recitation is a means of relief from the evils. It has already been mentioned in hadith 22 that if the Qur'an is recited in a house, peace and mercy descend upon it and Satan quits the place. The 'ulama interpret fitnahs to mean the coming of Dajjaal (Islamic Anti-Christ), the invasion by the Tatars, and like incidents. A long riwaayat from Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) also includes the subject-matter of this hadith.

It is mentioned in this riwaayat of Hadhrat 'Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) that Hadhrat Yahya (Alayhis salaam) told the Israelites: "Allah orders you to read His Book, and if you do so, you will be like the people protected in a fort, so

that on whichever side the enemy wants to attack you, he will find there the Word of Allah as a guard to repulse him."

PART 2

CONCLUDING SECTION

فِىْ عِدَّةِ رِوَايَاتٍ زَائِدَةٍ عَلَى الْاَرْبَعِيْنَةِ لَابُدَّ مِنْ ذِكْرِهَا لِاَغْرَاضٍ تُنَاسِبُ الْمُقَامَ

There are a few ahadith over and above the forty already narrated, which certainly need to be mentioned, being appropriate for this place.

In this section, some special virtues of certain surahs are narrated. These surahs are short, but excel in virtues and rewards. In addition, there are one or two important matters, about which the readers of the Qur'an need to be warned.

HADITH-1

(١) عَنْ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ عُمَيْرٍ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ مُرْسَلًا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ فِىْ فَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ شِفَآءٌ مِّنْ كُلِّ دَآءٍ (رواه الدارمى والبيهقى فى شعب الإيمان)

Hadhrat 'Abdul Malik bin Umair (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "In surah Fatihah there is a cure for all ailments."

The virtues of surah Fatihah are found in many ahadith. It is reported in one hadith, "a Sahabi was offering nafl salaat; Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) called him, but since he was offering salaat he did not respond. After completing the salaat he went to Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), who asked him why he did not respond as soon as he was called. He submitted that he could not do so because he was offering salaat. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) asked if he dit not read the following verse in Qur'an:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا اسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَلِلرَّسُوْلِ اِذَا دَعَاكُمْ

Respond to the call of Allah and His Messenger whenever They call you.

Then Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "I tell you of a surah which is the greatest, the most virtuous in

the Holy Qur'an. It is surah Al-Hamd (The first surah of the Qur'an), which has seven ayaat. These are the 'Sab'ul Mathaani' and represent the Grand Qur'an." It is said by some Sufia that whatever there was in the earlier Divine Books is condensed in the Glorious Qur'an, and the contents of Qur'an are condensed into 'surah Fatihah; and that which is in surah Fatihah is found in Bismillaah and that which is in Bismillah is to be found in its first letter ب (ba). It is explained that ب (ba) is a co-ordinating conjunction and stands for uniting. Surely the ultimate aim is to effect union of a devotee with Almighty Allah. Some 'Sufia' have gone still further and have said that whatever there is in ب (ba) is to be found in its dot, which signifies the Unity of Allah—a thing which is indivisible as a dot.

Some scholars are reported to have said that the verse—

اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ

"We worship Thee and we seek Thy help", is prayer for fulfilment of all our objectives, both worldly and spiritual. According to another hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) is reported to have said, "By Him Who is in possession of my life, a surah like this one has neither been revealed in the Torah nor in the Bible nor in the Psalms, nor even in the rest of the Qur'an.

The Mashaa'ikh have stated that the reading of surah Fatihah with firm belief and faith cures all maladies, whether spiritual or worldly, external or internal. To use its writing as an amulet, and also licking its writing is useful in the treatment of diseases. It occurs in Sihaah (the six authentic books of Hadith) that the Sahabah used to read surah Fatihah and blow upon those bitten by a snake or a scorpion, and even on the epileptic and on the mentally deranged. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) had also approved of this. There is another riwaayat to the effect that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) recited this surah and blew on Saa'ib bin Yazeed and applied his saliva on the spot (where some pain was felt by the latter). According to another hadith, it is said that if, at the time of going to sleep, one reads surah Fatihah and surah Ikhlaas and blows on himself he will be immune from all dangers except death.

According to one riwaayat, surah Fatihah is equivalent to two-thirds of the Qur'an in reward. It is also reported

that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has said, "I have been given four things from the special treasure of the Arsh, from which nothing has ever been given to any one before. These are surah Fatihah, Aayatul Kursi, the concluding ayaat of surah Baqarah and Surah Kowthar." Hadhrat Hasan Basri (Rahmatullah alaih) reports the saying of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that whoever reads surah Fatihah is like one who reads the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms and the Glorious Qur'an.

It is reported in one hadith that the devil lamented, wept and threw dust on his head on four occasions; first, when he was cursed; secondly when he was cast out of Heaven unto the earth; thirdly when Hadhrat Muhammad (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) was given the Prophethood, and fourthly when surah Fatihah was revealed.

It is reported from Sha'bi (Rahmatullah alaih) that once a man came to him and complained of pain in his kidney. Sha'bi (Rahmathulla alaih) advised him to read Asaasul Qur'an (the foundation of the Qur'an) and blow on the aching spot. When he inquired what was meant by "Asaasul Qur'an", Sha'bi replied, "Surah Fatihah."

It is written in the established practices of mashaa'ikh that surah Fatihah is the Isme A'zam (اسم اعظم), the Most Glorious Name of Allah, and it should be read for the achievement of all our objectives. There are two ways of reading it:

One method is to read this surah forty-one times for forty days, in the interval between the sunnat (a practice of the Holy Prophet) (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) and fardh rak'aats of the Fajr salaat. The meem of بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (Bismillaahir rahmaanir raheem) should be read jointly with the laam of الحمد لله (Alhamdu lillaahi). Whatever the objective may be, it will, insha-Allah (if Allah wills), be fulfilled. In the treatment of a patient or of one who is bewitched, it should be recited and blown on water to be used for drinking.

The second method is to read it seventy times between the sunnat and the fardh rak'aat of the Fajr salaat on the first Sunday of a new moon, after which the number is reduced by ten every day until the course ends with a reading of ten times on the seventh day. Then this weekly course should be repeated, so as to complete four weeks. If

the purpose is achieved at the end of the first month, well and good, otherwise this course should be repeated for the second and, if necessary, for the third month.

The surah is also written with water of roses, musk and saffron, on a porcelain dish, then the writing is washed off and the wash-water is given to the patient for drinking for forty days. This is a sure treatment of chronic diseases. To read it seven times and then blow on the patient is similarly an accepted treatment for toothache, headache and pain in the stomach.

All these points have been briefly quoted from the book 'Mazaahir-e-Haq."

'Muslim Sharif' contains a hadith in which Ibn 'Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that once Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) was sitting among us and said, "In Heaven a door has been opened today which was never opened before, and out of it has descended an angel who had never descended before. The angel said to me, "Receive the good news of two 'anwaar' which have not been bestowed upon anyone else before. One is surah Fatihah and the other the concluding portion of surah Baqarah, i.e. its last 'ruku' (section of the Qur'an)'." These two surahs have been called 'noor', because on the Day of Judgement these will travel in front of their readers (illuminating their path).

HADITH–2

(٢) عَنْ عَطَاءِ بْنِ اَبِیْ رَبَاحٍ رَضِیَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ بَلَغَنِیْ اَنَّ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ ﷺ قَالَ مَنْ قَرَاَ یٰسٓ فِیْ صَدْرِ النَّهَارِ قُضِیَتْ حَوَائِجُهُ (رواه الدارمی)

Hadhrat 'Ataa' bin Abi Ribaah, (Radhiyallaho anho) says that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) is reported to have said, "Whoever reads surah Yaaseen in the beginning of the day, all his needs for that day are fulfilled."

Many merits of surah Yaaseen are mentioned in ahadith. It is said in one hadith, "Everything has a heart, and the heart of the Glorious Qur'an is surah Yaaseen. Whoever reeds surah Yaaseen, Almighty Allah records for him a reward equal to that of reading the whole Qur'an ten times."

According to another Hadith Almighty Allah recited surah Yaaseen and surah Taahaa one thousand years before the creation of Heaven and Earth, and on hearing this the angels said, "Blessing is for the ummat unto whom the Qur'an will be sent down, blessing is for the hearts that will bear, i.e. memorize it, and blessing is for the tongues that will recite it."

There is other riwaayat like this, "Whoever reads surah Yaaseen for the pleasure of Allah only, all his earlier sins are forgiven. Therefore make a practice of reading this surah over your dead."

According to one hadith, surah Yaaseen is named in, Torah as mun'imah (giver of good things), because it contains benefits for its reader in this life as well as in the Hereafter; it removes from him the afflictions of this world and the next; and takes away the dread of the next life.

This 'surah' is also known as 'Raafi'ah Khaafidhaah', i.e., that which exalts the status of the believers and degrades the unbelievers. According to a riwaayat, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "My heart desires that surah Yaaseen should be present in the heart of everyone of my ummat." According to another hadith, if anybody recites surah Yaaseen every night and then dies, he dies as shaheed (martyr).

It is reported in another hadith "Whoever reads surah Yaaseen, is forgiven; whoever reads it in hunger, is satisfied; whoever reads it having lost his way finds the way; whoever reads it on losing an animal finds the same. And when one reads it apprehending that his food will run short, that food becomes sufficient. And if one reads it beside a person who is in the throes of death, the same are made easy for him. And if anyone reads it on a woman experiencing difficulty in child-birth, her delivery becomes easy."

Maqri (Rahmatullah alaih) said, "If surah Yaaseen is read by one who fears the ruler or an enemy, he gets rid of this fear." According to another hadith, if somebody reads surah Yaaseen and surah Was-Saaffaat on Friday and begs of Allah something, his prayer is granted. (Most of the above has been drawn from Mazaahir-e-Haq, though the scholars of hadith have questioned some of the riwaayaat).

HADITH–3

(٣) عَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُوْدٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ مَنْ قَرَأَ سُوْرَةَ الْوَاقِعَةِ فِيْ كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ لَمْ تُصِبْهُ فَاقَةٌ اَبَدًا وَكَانَ ابْنُ مَسْعُوْدٍ يَأْمُرُ بَنَاتَهُ يَقْرَأْنَ بِهَا كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ (رواه البيهقى فى الشعب)

Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Whoever reads surah Al-Waaqi'ah every night, starvation shall never afflict him."

Ibn Mas'ood (Radhiyallaho anho) used to command his daughters to recite this surah every night.

The virtues of surah Al-Waaqi'ah are also reported in many ahadith. There is a riwaayat to the effect that whoever reads surahs al-Hadeed, Al-Waaqi'ah and Ar-Rahmaan, is reckoned amongst the dwellers of Jannat-ul-Firdaus (the highest level of Paradise). In another hadith, it is stated that surah Al-Waaqi'ah, is surah Al-Ghinaa. Read it and teach it to your children. Another riwaayat says: "Teach it to your wives." Hadhrat 'Aa'ishah (Radhiyallaho anha) is reported to have emphasized its reading. But it is low mentality on our part to read it only for sake of petty worldly gain. If instead, it is read for the contentment of the heart and for the sake of the next world, then worldly gains will come to us without the asking.

HADITH–4

(٤) عَنْ اَبِيْ هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ اِنَّ سُوْرَةً فِي الْقُرْآنِ ثَلٰثُوْنَ آيَةً شَفَعَتْ لِرَجُلٍ حَتّٰى غُفِرَ لَهُ وَهِيَ تَبَارَكَ الَّذِىْ بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ (رواه أبوداود وأحمد والنسائى وابن ماجه والحاكم وصححه وابن حبان فى صحيحه)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallaho anho) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "There is in the Qur'an a surah of thirty ayaat which intercedes for a person (its reader) until he is forgiven. This is surah Tabarakal lazi."

About surah Tabarakal lazi, there is a riwaayat also that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "My heart desires that this surah should be in the heart of every believer."

According to a hadith, one who reads surah Tabarakal lazi and Alif-Laam Meem-Sajdah, between the Maghrib (dusk) salaat and the Ishaa' salaat, is like a person who stands in Salaat throughout the night called Lailatul Qadr (27th night of Ramadhaan—the month of fasting and the 9th month of the Islamic calendar). It is also reported that if somebody reads these two surahs, seventy virtues are added to his account and seventy sins are condoned. According to another riwaayat, if one reads these two surahs, a reward equal to that of standing in salaat throughout Lailatul Qadr is written for him. This is also mentioned in Mazaahir.

Tirmidhi (Rahmatullah alaih) reports from Ibn Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho): "Some sahabah pitched a tent, at a place without knowing that there was a grave at that place. All of a sudden, those who were putting up the tent heard somebody reciting surah Tabarakal lazi. They reported the matter to Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), who explained to them that this surah guards against Allah's chastisement and ensures deliverance."

Jaabir (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) would not go to sleep until he had recited the surahs Alif Laam Meem-Sajdah and Tabarakal lazi.

Khalid bin Ma'daan (Radhiyallaho anho) has said that he had heard it narrated, "There was a man who was a great sinner, but he used to recite surah Sajdah. He never read anything else. This surah spread its wings over that man and submitted to Allah, 'O, my Lord! this man used to recite me very frequently'. So the intercession of that surah was accepted. It was ordered that each sin in his account should be substituted by a virtue." Khalid bin Ma'daan (Radhiyallaho anho) has also reported, "This surah pleads for its reader in the grave and says, 'O, Allah! if I am contained in Thy Book, then accept my intercession, otherwise write me off from Thy Book. This surah appears in the form of a bird, spreads its wings over the dead and guards him against punishment in the grave." He has reported all these merits for surah Tabarakal lazi as well. He himself would never go to sleep unless he had read these two surahs.

Taa'oos (Rahmatullah alaih) has said, "These two

surahs carry sixty virtues in excess of those carried by any other surah."

The punishment in the grave is not an ordinary affair. After death, the first stage that one has to pass through is the grave. Whenever Hadhrat 'Usman (Radhiyallaho anho) stood by a grave, he used to weep so much that his beard would become wet with tears. Somebody asked him why he wept more at the mention of the grave than he did at the mention of Heaven and Hell. He replied, "I have heard from Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that the grave is the first stage towards the Hereafter. Whoever is saved from chastisement in it, for him the subsequent events become easy, and whoever is not saved from chastisement in it, for him the coming events will be harsher still. And I have also heard that no scene is more horrible than that of the grave.":

اَللّٰهُمَّ احْفَظْنَا مِنْهُ بِفَضْلِكَ وَمَنِّكَ

O, Allah! save us from this punishment through Thy Mercy and Grace.

HADITH–5

(٥) عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ اَنَّ رَجُلًا قَالَ يَارَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ اَىُّ الْاَعْمَالِ اَفْضَلُ قَالَ الْحَالُ الْمُرْتَحِلُ قَالَ يَارَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ مَاالْحَالُ الْمُرْتَحِلُ قَالَ صَاحِبُ الْقُرْآنِ يَضْرِبُ مِنْ اَوَّلِهٖ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ آخِرَهُ وَمِنْ آخِرِهٖ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ اَوَّلَهُ كُلَّمَا حَلَّ اِرْتَحَلَ

(رواه الترمذى كما فى الرحمة والحاكم وقال تفرد به صالح المرى وهو من زهاد أهل البصرة إلا أن الشيخين لم يخرجاه وقال الذهبى صالح متروك قلت هو من رواة أبى داود والترمذى)

Ibn Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho) says: "Somebody asked Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) as to which of the acts is the most virtuous. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied الحال والمرتحل ('al-haal wal-murtahil'). The man inquired, 'O, Rasullulah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam)! what is 'alah-al wal murtahil?' Rasulallah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied, "It is that particular reader of the Qur'an who starts reading from the beginning and continues till he reaches its end, and after the end, he starts at the beginning again. Wherever he stops, he proceeds further."

The Arabic word (الحال) ('al-haal) means one who reaches a halting place, and the word (المرتحل) ('al-murtahil') means one who departs. In other words, as soon as a reading of the Holy Qur'an is finished, one should start again. And it should not be that when one reading is finished the other may be taken up later on. The term (الحال والمرتحل) ('al-haal wal murtahil') is explained in a riwaayat in Kanzul-Ummaal to mean (الخاتم المفتاح) (al-khaatimatul miftaah) (one who concludes and opens), i.e. one who completes the whole reading of the Holy Qur'an and then immediately starts another. Probably this has led to the practice generally prevalent in our country, according to which the reader while finishing the whole Qur'an does not stop after reading the last surah but also reads from the beginning of the Qur'an up to مُفْلِحُوْن. Doing so has now become a mere ritual and the people do not care to continue further and complete the reading. This hadith teaches us that, as soon as one reading of the Glorious Qur'an is completed, a fresh reading should be taken up immediately and brought to completion. It is written in Sharhul Ihya as well as in Allamah Suyuti's Al-Itqan that according to Daarami whenever Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) read surah an-Naas (the last surah), he would also read al-Baqarah up to مُفْلِحُوْن after which he would offer the du'a meant to be read on completion of a reading of the whole Qur'an.

HADITH–6

(٦) عَنْ اَبِىْ مُوْسٰى الْاَشْعَرِىِّ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ تَعَاهَدُوْا الْقُرْآنَ فَوَالَّذِىْ نَفْسِىْ بِيَدِهٖ لَهُوَ اَشَدُّ تَفَصِّيًا مِّنَ الْاِبِلِ فِىْ عُقُلِهَا

(رواه البخارى ومسلم)

Abu Musa Ash'ari (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Be watchful towards the Qur'an. I swear by Him in Whose hands my life is, that the Qur'an is apt to escape from the hearts more rapidly than do the camels from their strings."

If a man becomes neglectful in looking after an animal, and the animal frees itself from the halter, it will bolt away. Similarly if the Holy Qur'an is not looked after, it will not be remembered and will be forgotten. The fact that the

Holy Qur'an gets committed to memory is a distinct miracle of the Book itself. Otherwise memorizing a book one-half or even one-third of its size is not only difficult but well-nigh impossible. Therefore, the fact that the Holy Qur'an gets committed to memory is mentioned by Almighty Allah as a Divine favour in surah al-Qamar, where it is repeated over and over–

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ

We have made the Qur'an easy for remembrance, So is there any one who will remember?

The author of al-Jalalain writes that the interrogatory clause in this ayat is in fact an imperative one. Thus Almighty Allah has stressed over and over again the importance of memorizing the Qur'an, but if we Muslims are so perverse as to think that this act is useless and wasteful of time and energy, this blunder on our part is sufficient to justify our destruction. It is a matter of surprise indeed that, when 'Uzair (Alayhis salaam) reproduced the Torah from memory he was exalted to be called the "Son of God;" poor indeed is the regard that we have for the blessing and favour of Allah, that He has made the memorizing of the Glorious Qur'an easy for all of us (and not only for an individual as in the case of Torah). It is for such people that the Qur'an says:

فَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا اَىَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَّنْقَلِبُوْنَ

And those who do wrong will come to know by what a (Great) reverse they will be over-turned!

It is merely through the grace and blessing of Almighty Allah that the Qur'an gets memorized, but afterwards, if a person neglects it, he is made to forget it. There are severe admonitions for those who forget the Glorious Qur'an after having learnt it. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) is reported to have said, "The sins of my ummat were shown to me. I did not find any sin as great as that of forgetting the Holy Qur'an after having read it. "In another hadith it is said tnat any one who forgets Qur'an after having read it, will appear in the Court of Allah as a leper. According to a riwaayat of Razeen (Rahmatullah alaih) in 'Jam'ul-Fawaa'id', the following ayat refer to it:

وَمَنْ اَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِىْ فَاِنَّ لَهٗ مَعِيْشَةً ضَنْكًا وَّنَحْشُرُهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ اَعْمٰى ، قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِىْٓ اَعْمٰى وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيْرًا ، قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اَتَتْكَ اٰيٰتُنَا فَنَسِيْتَهَا وَكَذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْسٰى

But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a narrowed life and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement. He shall say: "My Lord, why hast Thou raised me blind, and I was a seeing one indeed." He will say, "Even so Our Commandments came to thee, but thou didst neglect them; even thus shalt thou be forsaken today." (XX: 126-6).

HADITH–7

(٧) عَنْ بُرَيْدَةَ رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ﷺ مَنْ قَرَاَ الْقُرْاٰنَ يَتَاَكَّلُ بِهِ النَّاسَ جَاءَ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ وَوَجْهُهٗ عَظْمٌ لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ لَحْمٌ (رواه البيهقى فى شعب الإيمان)

Buraidah (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "He who reads the Qur'an so that he might thereby get something to eat from the people, shall so appear on the Day of Judgement that his face will only be a bone, on which there will be no flesh.

This means that those who read the Glorious Qur'an in order to fulfil the needs of this world will get no share in the Hereafter. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has said, "We read the Holy Qur'an. There are amongst us Arabs as well as non-Arabs. Go on reading the Qur'an as you do it now. Shortly, there will rise people who will set right the pronunciation of letters of the Qur'an as an arrow, i.e., they will work hard to adorn it and spend hours in improving the pronunciation of each and every letter. They will take great pains over phonetics. But all this will be with a worldly motive. They will be the least concerned with the Hereafter." This hadith further signifies that mere recitation in a pleasing voice is of no avail if there would be no sincerity and if the purpose is only to earn worldly benefit. "There will be no flesh" means that when a man makes the noblest of all things (i.e. the Qur'an) the means for earning the inferior things of this world, the noblest of

all parts of the body, i.e. his face, will be deprived of its beauty.

Once 'Imraan bin Husain (Radhiyallaho anho) happened to pass by a preacher who recited the Glorious Qur'an and then begged of the people. He was grieved to see this painful sight and recited 'Innaa lillaahi wa innaailaihi raaji-oon' (verily we are from Allah and will return to Him). He said that he had heard from Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that whoever recites the Glorious Qur'an should beg whatever he needs only from Almighty Allah. Shortly, there will come into existence a people who will recite and then beg of the people. It is reported from some scholars that the "example of one who earns the gains of this world through the knowledge of deen is like that of one who cleans his shoes with his cheeks; the shoes will no doubt be cleaned, but the act is most stupid. It is such people who are referred to in the following ayat of the Glorious Qur'an:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ - الآية

> These are they who buy error at the price of guidance. So their commerce doth not prosper, neither are they guided.

Ubayy bin Ka'b (Radhiyallaho anho) has narrated, "I taught a surah of the Glorious Qur'an to a man who gave me a bow as a gift. I mentioned this to Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), who said that I had accepted a bow from Hell." A similar incident has been mentioned about himself by 'Ubaadah bin Saamit (Radhiyallaho anho) in whose case Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) he said, "You have hung between your shoulders a spark from Hell." According to another riwaayat Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) had said, "If you are prepared to put a yoke of Hell round your neck, you may accept it."

Now a word for such huffaaz who are working in Qur'anic schools, only for the sake of money. It is humbly requested that they should give a thoughtful consideration to their status and responsibility. This unbecoming conduct on their part is being attacked and made an excuse by some people for stopping the reading or memorizing of the Glorious Qur'an. They alone are not responsible for the evil consequences, but such huffaaz also share the responsibility for stopping the teaching of the Glorious Qur'an. These huffaaz think that they are engaged in the propagation of the Qur'an, but in reality they are obstructing it, through their misconduct and bad intentions. The ulama have not permitted the acceptance of salary for teaching the Glorious Qur'an so that it becomes the primary motive. In fact, the real motive of the teachers should only be to promote the education and propagation of knowlegde of the Qur'an. No salary can be a return for the sublime act of teaching the Qur'an. Such remuneration is only for meeting personal needs and has been permitted when forced by circumstances, in case of dire necessity.

PART–3

FINAL NOTE

The purpose of describing the beauties and virtues of the Holy Qur'an in the foregoing pages is to cultivate a love for it. Love for the Holy Qur'an is needed for developing a love for Almighty Allah, and vice versa. Love for one leads to love for the other.

The creation of man in this world is only for the purpose of acquiring a realization of Allah, and all other creation is for the sake of man. As a Persian poet says:

ابر و باد و مہ و خورشید و فلک در کارند   تا تو نانے بکف آری و بغفلت نخوری
ہمہ از بہر تو سرگشتہ و فرماں بردار   شرط انصاف نباشد کہ تو فرماں نبری

The clouds, the winds, the moon, the sun and the sky are constantly at work,

So that you earn your living and do not eat in forgetfulness

The whole creation is involved in working for you in obedience,

The law of justice will not be fulfilled if you fail to obey (Allah).

So man should learn a lesson from their punctuality and obedience in their functions of rendering service to him.

Sometimes, as a warning, temporary changes are caused in their functions by Almighty Allah. There is no rain when it should rain; no wind blows when it should blow; similar changes are wrought in the moon and the sun through their eclipses. In short, everything is subject to some change for admonishing those who neglect their duty to their Creator. How astonishing indeed that all these things be made subservient to fulful man's needs, yet their obedience does not lead man to his own submission to the Creator. Love alone provides the best help for obedience and submission to Almighty Allah.

اِنَّ الْمُحِبَّ لِمَنْ يُحِبُّ مُطِيْعٌ

Verily, the lover submits to his beloved.

When a person falls in love with someone, submission and obedience to the beloved becomes his habit and second nature. Disobedience to the beloved becomes as hard as it unwilling obedience to one whom one does not love.

One way of developing love for someone is the observation of his beauty and excellence. This observation may be through the physical senses or through inner perception. If a look at a beautiful face can lead to spontaneous love, a sweet heart-captivating voice can also sometimes produce a magnetic effect. A Persian poet says:

نہ تنہا عشق از دیدار خیزد
بسا کیں دولت از گفتار خیزد

Looks alone do not inspire love;

Often this wealth is attained through charming words.

Sometimes it is the sweetness of voice which draws the heart unconsciously and sometimes it is the beauty and wisdom of expression which causes one to fall in love. Experienced men have suggested that in order to develop love, one should dwell upon the fine attributes of the beloved, and none other than the beloved should find a place in one's heart. It is true even in the case of earthly love that the sight of a beautiful face or a hand urges one to see the other parts of the body of the beloved, so that love may increase and the yearning of the heart may be satisfied, but the stage of satisfaction is never reached. As an Urdu poet says:

مرض بڑھتا گیا جوں جوں دوا کی

The disease worsened as the treatment progressed.

If after sowing the seeds in a field, one does not care to water it, no crop will grow there. Similarly, after falling in love involuntarily, if one does not pay attention to the beloved, this love will vanish in course of time. But if one

keeps on visualizing the charming features, the stature as well as the gait and the manner of speaking of the beloved, love will go on increasing every moment.

مکتبِ عشق کے انداز نرالے دیکھے
اس کو چھٹی نہ ملی جس نے سبق یاد کیا

Unusual are the ways in the school of love, One who learns his lesson gets no leave.

If you forget the lesson of love, there is a riddance for you at once. But the more you learn it, the more you are entrapped. In the same way, if a man wants to develop love with someone worthy of love, he should find out the excellence, the charms and the valued attributes of the beloved and should not remain content with what he knows, but should always be eager to know more about them.

When, even in the case of mortal beloved, the lover is not satisfied with a partial view of the beloved, and is always on the lookout for more chances to see as much of the beloved as he can, then Almighty Allah, the Pure and Sanctified, Who is the fountainhead of all elegance and beauty, (and in fact there is no beauty in this world except His) is certainly such a beloved Whose loveliness and perfection knows no bounds and is limitless. One of the manifestations of His utmost excellence is the Glorious Quran, which is the Word of Allah Himself. What greater plasure can there be for a lover of the Divine, than the fact that the Qur'an is Allah's own Revelation. A poet says:

اے گل بتو خرسندم تو بوئے کسے داری

'O, flower! how pleased am I with you, You have the smell of someone (beloved).

Even if we leave aside the consideration that the Holy Qur'an has its origin in Allah and is His attribute, the relationship that the Qur'an has with Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) is enough for a Muslim to adore it. Study of the Qur'an itself makes one realise that there is no excellence elsewhere that cannot be found in the Glorious Qur'an.

A poet says:

دامانِ نگہ تنگ و گلِ حسنِ تو بسیار
گلچینِ بہارِ تو ز داماں گلہ دارد

The limits of sight are narrow and the flowers of your beauty numerous;
He who plucks the flowers of your spring complains of the inadequacy of his hold.

There is another verse to this effect:

فدا ہو آپ کی کس کس ادا پر
ادائیں لاکھ اور بیتاب دل ایک

How many of your graces can be adored;
Your charms are innumerable and my restless heart is one.

It is evident to the careful reader of the above ahadith, that there is hardly any important thing of this world to which attention has not been drawn. Whatever taste for love and beauty one may possess, its excellence and perfection will be found in the Qur'an. In the first hadith the excellence of the Glorious Qur'an has been established over the beauty, as a whole or in substance, that lies in all worldly things; against the infinite number of excellent attributes that one can imagine, the Glorious Qur'an is found to be superior and matchless in respect of all of them.

The Holy Qur'an is superior to all other lovable things, taken individually or collectively in every respect. If one loves somebody because of the innumerable benefits accruing from him, Almighty Allah has promised (hadith 2) that He will give to the reader of the Qur'an more than that begged of Him by all other persons.

If somebody is adored for his personal greatness, attainment or excellence, Almighty Allah has said (in the same hadith) that the superiority of the Qur'an over all other discourses is like the superiority of Allah Himself over His creation, of the master over his slaves and of the possessor over those possessed.

If anybody is fond of wealth, property, servants and animals, and loves to rear animals of a particular kind, he is warned (in hadith 3) that the knowledge of the Qur'an is far more valuable than any number of good animals acquired even without labour or crime.

If a mystic seeks piety and fear of Allah, and works hard to acquire them, Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has said (hadith 4) that those who become proficient in the study of the Qur'an, will be reckoned amongst the angels. The piety of the angels cannot be excelled by anybody, because they cannot pass even a moment in disobedience to Allah.

Also if anybody takes pride in getting double the reward or if he likes that his words should carry a double weight, he should consider how even the reader who falters in his recitation gets double the reward.

If any jealous person can delight only in evil conduct, and jealousy has become a part and parcel of his nature and he cannot give up this vice, he can be rightly jealous of a hafiz whose excellence is worth being jealous of, as said by Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) (hadith 5).

Let one who relishes fruit and cannot live without it, know that the Qur'an is like citron. If anybody is fond of sweets, he should know that Qur'an is sweeter than dates. (Hadith 6 refers to this.)

If anybody is desirous of honour and dignity and cannot resist being a member of some council, he should know that the Qur'an exalts the rank of its reader, both in this world as well as in the Hereafter. (This is mentioned in hadith 7.)

If anybody wants a sincere and dedicated companion, who should be ready to defend him in every dispute, he should know that the Qur'an is ready to defend its devotee in the court of the Emperor of all emperors (as mentioned in hadith 8.)

If a seeker of subtleties devotes his life to the critical study of various subjects, and appreciation of a delicate point is sufficient to turn him away from the greatest pleasure of this world, he should know that the body of the Qur'an is a treasure full of subtleties (as described in hadith 9).

If somebody attaches importance to discovering hidden secrets, and considers that experience in the criminal investigation department is an accomplishment and devotes his life to acquiring it, he should know that the body of the Holy Qur'an reveals those mysteries whose depths are boundless and to which hadith 10 refers.

Also if one hankers after the construction of lofty buildings and wants his special abode to be on the seventh floor, then verily the Qur'an raises its devotee to the seven thousandth floor in Paradise.

If anybody desires to do business which should bring maximum profit with a minimum of labour, he should know that the recitation of each letter of the Holy Qur'an yields ten blessings (as referred to in Hadith 10).

If anybody hankers after a crown and a throne, and for their sake fights battles in this world, he should consider that the Qur'an gets for the parents of its devotees a crown whose brilliance has no parellel in this world. (This is mentioned in hadith 11.)

If there is any expert in feats of jugglery who can catch a burning coal in his hand or can put a burning match-stick in his mouth, he should realize that the Glorious Qur'an provides safety even against the fire of Hell. (For this see hadith 12.)

There are people who want to develop good relations with government officers and take pride in relating how, as a result of their recommendation to an officer, an accused had not been punished but had been set free. For finding access to these officers, they spend their time and money everyday in flatteries and arrange dinners and so on. Through the intercession of its devotees, the Glorious Qur'an arranges deliverance of ten people who shall have been condemned to Hell. (This is mentioned in hadith 13.)

Now let us consider hadith 14. If somebody is fond of flowers and gardens and loves sweet smells, he should realize that the Holy Qur'an has been compared to musk. If someone loves perfumes and wants to bathe in dried musk, then the example of the Glorious Qur'an is like a musk-vase. This is only for illustration, otherwise musk has no comparison with the fragance of the Holy Qur'an. The particles of this earth cannot be likened to the Heavenly ones. **A Persian Poet says:**

کار زلف تست مشک افشانی اما عاشقاں
مصلحت را تہمتے بر آہوئے چیں بستہ اند

That sprinkling of musk is in fact the act of your looks;
It is out of expediency that lovers accuse the Chinese deer (reported to yield musk).

A person who is often beaten and works for fear of punishment, and persuasion is of no avail to him, will be benefited to know that one whose heart is devoid of the Qur'an, is like a ruined house (as mentioned in hadith 15.)

If a devotee is in search of the best way of all worships and is careful to devote himself to those acts which brings maximum of reward, he should know that recitation of the Holy Qur'an is superior to all other forms of worship, and it is specially mentioned in hadith 16 that it is superior to nafl salaat, fasting, tasbeeh and tahleel' (acclamation).

Some people are deeply interested in pregnant animals, as they fetch more price than the ordinary ones. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has specifically said that the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an is far more precious than such animals (see hadith 17.)

Many people are always worried about their health. They take exercise and bathe every day, they run or go out for a walk in the morning. There are others who are given to grief, worry and anxiety. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has said that the surah Fatihah provides treatment for every disease and the Holy Qur'an cures the ailment of the hearts, as mentioned in hadith 19.

People take pride in so many things that it is difficult to enumerate all these, for example, some boast of their lineage or good habits, others of their popularity or foresight. In fact, a thing of real pride is the Glorious Qur'an, which possesses all beauty and perfection.

As a Persian verse goes:

آنچہ خوباں ہمہ دارند تو تنہا داری

"What all the other beloveds possess collectively; You alone possess all that." (For this see hadith 20.)

Many people are fond of accumulating wealth. For this purpose, they practise miserliness in their food and dress,

undergo many hardships and develop a mania that is not satisfied by any amount of wealth. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has advised us that the only thing that should be treasured as much as possible is the Holy Qur'an. No treasure of wealth is better than this. (Hadith 21 refers to this.)

Similarly if anybody is fond of illumination and uses ten electric bulbs to light up his room, he should know that the Holy Qur'an provides the best of lights.

People earnestly desire to receive presents, and they expect gifts from their friends every day. They increase their sphere of acquaintance only with this motive. If anyone of their friends does not send them their share of fruit from his garden, they complain of him. They should realise that the Holy Qur'an is the best giver of gifts. Peace descends on those who recite the Glorious Qur'an. If you are enamoured of someone because he sends you a present everyday, then you would be pleased to know that the attachment with the Glorious Qur'an will bring you precious gifts (see hadith 22).

Some people fawn on a minister, so that he may mention them in the court of the ruler, some flatter the subordinates so that they may praise him before the officer. Sometimes a person entreats others so that they may mention his name in the presence of his beloved. Let all such people learn how, through the Glorious Qur'an, they may make themselves worthy of being mentioned by the beloved Lord Himself. (We find this mentioned in hadith 23.)

If a person is always eager to know about the most favourite thing of the beloved, and he is prepared to perform even the most arduous task to procure it, he should know that there is nothing more lovable to Allah than the Glorious Qur'an.

Some people seek access to the court of the ruler and, with this end in view, they plan and struggle all their lives. Through the Holy Qur'an we can become the special favourites of Almighty Allah, before Whom the greatest of kings is completely helpless (see hadith 24.)

It is strange that in order to become a member of some council, or to join the hunting party of some man in authority, people make sacrifices of time, money and comfort. They use all sorts of mean tactics for approaching them and

thereby spoil their own temporal as well as spiritual life, only for the sake of gaining some false honours. Is it then not necessary to make some effort to win the real honour, and become a courtier of the Almighty Lord? If they can spend their whole life for the vanity of this world, we must spend at least a part of our lives for pleasing the very One Who gave us this life.

If you are fond of 'Chistiyyat' and do not find solace except in gatherings of men devotees, you should know that gatherings for recitation of the Qur'an are far more enthralling and attract the ears of the most unmindful.

If you want to attract the attention of our Great Master, you must devote yourself to the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an (This is discussed in ahadith 25 and 26).

If we declare ourselves to be Muslims and also feel proud of Islam, then we should know that it is the command of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) that the Glorious Qur'an should be recited in a befitting manner. If our Islam is not a mere declaration and it has really something to do with obedience to Allah and His Prophet (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), then we should realise that Almighty Allah and Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) have commanded the recitation of the Qur'an.

If you are a staunch nationalist and love a Turkish cap because you consider it to be a part of Islamic dress, if you are interested in national culture and its propagation by all possible means, if you write articles in the newspapers for this purpose and pass resolutions in public meetings, you should know that Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has commanded us to do our best to propagate the Holy Qur'an (see hadith 27.)

At this stage, it will not be out of place to express disappointment about the attitude of our national leaders in respect of the Qur'an. They do not assist in its propagation but, in some ways, help in obstructing it. Learning the Qur'an is looked upon by them as useless and a waste of time and effort. It is also considered an act of mental waste and fruitless toil. It may be that some of them are not in favour of this attitude, but when a group of people are engaged in anti-Qur'anic propaganda, silence on the part of our national leaders is tantamount to helping them in the crime. An Urdu poet says:

ہم نے مانا کہ تغافل نہ کرو گے لیکن
خاک ہو جائیں گے ہم تم کو خبر ہونے تک

We admit, you will not disregard us, but
We will be reduced to dust, before you become aware.

There are many who argue that the institution of teaching and learning the Holy Qur'an is promoted by the religious teachers for earning their bread. This is a vehement attack on the intention of all such teachers. Those who make such accusations are responsible for this calumny, which will have to be proved in the Hereafter. Such people are humbly requested to consider the results of the efforts of these so-called "selfish teachers" and also the would-be results of their own unselfish proposals. Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) has commanded us to propagate the Holy Book. They should judge for themselves how far they have personally contributed in carrying out the command of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam). Their attention is drawn to another misconception. Some people might think that they are not a party to this anti-Quranic propaganda and therefore remain unconcerned, but this cannot save them from the wrath of Allah.

The Sahabah (Radhiyallaho anhum) said to Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam):

اَنَهْلِكُ وَفِيْنَا الصَّالِحُوْنَ قَالَ نَعَمْ اِذَا كَثُرَ الْخُبْثُ

"Shall we be destroyed while there are righteous persons amongst us."

Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied, "Yes (it will be so), when evil shall have overwhelmed." There is another hadith to the same effect, "Almighty Allah ordered that a certain village should be overturned. Jibraa'eel (Alayhis salaam) submitted that in that village there was a person who had never committed any sin. Almighty Allah said that it was true, but though he witnessed so much disobedience to Me (around him), there never did appear a frown on his face (in its disapproval)". In fact, it is because of these ahadith that the ulama do not hesitate to express

their disapproval when they see any disobedience to Almighty Allah being committed. It is deplorable that some of our so-called enlightened people consider it to be narrowmindedness on the part of ulama. This so-called broad-mindedness on the part of such people does not absolve them of their responsibility. They should understand that it is not the duty of the ulama alone to check disobedience to the Commandments of Allah. But it is the duty of every Muslim who sees disobedience being committed and has the power to stop it. Bilaal bin Sa'd (Radhiyallaho anho) has said, "If evil deeds are committed secretly, only the evil-doers suffer for it, but if they are committed openly, and nobody prevents them, all the people are punished."

There are some who are fond of history, and travel to consult old books of history wherever they may find them. Such people had better devote themselves to the study of the Qur'an, in which they will find an equivalent to all the books that are admitted to be most authoritative on the past ages.

If you want to acquire such a lofty status that even Prophets be commanded to sit in your company and participate in your gathering, you can do so through the Holy Qur'an. (Hadith 29 refers to this.)

If you are so lazy that you cannot apply yourself to hard work, even then you can earn an honourable status without any labour by means of the Glorious Qur'an. You should sit down and keep on listening silently to children reciting the Qur'an in a school. Thereby you shall earn a lot of reward without any hard work on your part. (This is referred to in hadith 30.)

If you are fond of variety, you can find it in the various ideas and different subjects of the Holy Qur'an, some dealing with mercy, others with chastisement, some relating to different stories and others to various commandments, and so on. You can also change your mode of recitation, low at times and loud at others. (see hadith 31.)

If your sins have passed all limits and you believe, you are to die one day, ahadith 32 to 34 will exhort you to lose no time and start recitation of the Qur'an, because you can never find such an influential intercessor, whose intercession is certain to be accepted. On the other hand, if you are very respectful and your sense of respect and honour

makes you avoid disputes with quarrelsome people, even at the cost of your valuable rights, you should try to avoid dispute with the Qur'an on the Day of Judgement, when it will be the strongest complainant, whose contention will be upheld and there will be nobody to defend the respondent.

If you are in need of a guide who would lead you to the house of your beloved, and one would pay any price for such a guidance, you should take to recitation of the Holy Qur'an. Again if you want to safeguard yourself against imprisonment, you have no way out except recitation of the Glorious Qur'an.

If you want to acquire the knowledge of the Prophets and you are its devotee, hadith 35 shows that you can specialize in it through study of the Qur'an. Similarly if you are keen to develop the best of character, you can do so through recitation of the Holy Qur'an.

If you are very fond of hilly places and they alone provide you with the best recreation and satisfaction, you should know that the Holy Qur'an will provide recreation for you on mounds of musk, even on the Day of Judgement, when all creatures will be in a state of terror. (Hadith 36 refers to this.)

If you want to excel in the worship of Almighty Allah by remaining busy in nafl salaat day and night, you should know that teaching and learning the Holy Qur'an is a better means of doing so. (See hadith 37.)

If you want to keep yourself away from all troubles and save yourself from all anxieties, you can do so simply by devoting yourself to the Holy Qur'an. (This is pointed out in hadith 40.)

If you need to consult a physician, you should know that surah Fatihah provides treatment of all diseases, vide hadith 1 of part 2–Concluding Section.

If your numerous daily needs remain unfulfilled, why should you not recite surah Yaaseen, vide hadith 2 of part 2–Concluding Section.

If you hanker after money, you had better read surah Waaqi'ah'. (hadith 3 under Part 2–Concluding Section, refers to this.)

If fear of chastisement in the grave haunts you, it can also be relieved by the Glorious Qur'an, vide hadith 4 of Part II–Concluding Section.

If you are looking for an occupation that will absorb all your time, you can find none better than the Holy Qur'an, vide hadith 5 of Part 2–Concluding Section.

If one has acquired the wealth of the Glorious Qur'an, he should carefully guard against its loss. To lose such blessing, after having got it, is a great tragedy. He should also abstain from such unworthy acts as might convert this blessing into a curse (vide ahadith 6 and 7 of Part 2–Concluding Section.)

I know that I am not competent enough to point out the beauties of the Glorious Qur'an. I have explained them according to my humble understanding. This has, however, opened up a field of contemplation for scholars of deep understanding. According to those who are well versed in the art of love, the following five qualities of the beloved incite love. First, it is the being of the beloved, which one loves. The vicissitudes of time have no effect on the form of the Glorious Qur'an; this guarantees its life and security. Secondly, there should be a natural relationship between the lover and the beloved. The Qur'an is the attribute of Almighty Allah. The relationship between the Creator and His creation, the Master and His servants, needs no explanation. A Persian poet says:

هست ربّ الناس را با جان ناس
اتصالِ بے تکیف و بے قیاس

The Creator of mankind has, with the life of Man, a connection that is incomprehensible and unimaginable.

An Urdu poet says:

سب سے ربطِ آشنائی ہے اسے
دل میں ہر اک کے رسائی ہے اسے

He has a relationship of friendliness with all; He reaches out to the heart of each and everyone.

The third, fourth and fifth qualities are beauty, perfection and benevolence, respectively.

If the foregoing ahadith are studied, keeping the above three qualities in view, scholars will not feel contented with what has been written by me, but they will themselves arrive at the natural conclusion that all considerations that promote love and liking, such as sense of respect and status, fondness and constancy, beauty and perfection, greatness and benevolence, peace and pleasure, wealth and property, in short all such things as promote love are pointed out by Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) to be possessed in a superb way by the Glorious Qur'an. It is but natural that some of these virtues may be hidden, and may not be directly visible as is the case with most of the wordly valuables. We do not reject a delicious fruit because of its rough outer cover. Nobody starts hating his beloved lady because she wears a veil. He would try, by all possible means, that his lady love unveils herself, but if he does not succeed, the very sight of the veil will thrill him, provided he is sure that it is his beloved indeed behind it. No doubt, the Glorious Qur'an excels in all the virtues that induce love, but if, for any reason, we fail to understand and realize them, it will not be wise on our part to become indifferent and disappointed. We should attribute this failure to our own shortcomings and feel sorry at our loss. We should contemplate more and more upon the beauties of the Glorious Qur'an and become worthy of understanding the Divine Book.

'Uthman (Radhiyallaho anho) and Huzaifah (Radhiyallaho anho) have reported that, if hearts become clean of all filth, then one would never be satiated with reading the Holy Qur'an. Thaabit Banaani (Rahmatullah alaih) said, "I put in a labour of twenty years to learn the Qur'an and it has been giving me solace for these twenty years." Thus it is obvious that whoever repents over his sins, and then meditates upon the Glorious Qur'an, will find it to possess all beauties that all the beloveds collectively possess. I wish I were also such a person. I, however, request the readers that they should not look to the humble personality of the writer, lest it should prevent them from realizing their objective, but they should consider the subject-matter and its source. I am only a means of drawing their attention to these sublime matters.

At this stage, it is just possible that some reader of this book might be blessed by Almighty Allah with an urge to learn the Holy Qur'an by heart and become a hafiz. If anyone has a desire to make his child a hafiz, then no special effort is required because this tender age itself is most conducive to memorizing. But if some grown-up person desires to memorize the Holy Qur'an, I suggest that he should start with a special prayer, which was recommended by Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) and has been found effective by many people. It has been reported by Tirmizi, Hakim and others as follows:—

Hadhrat Ibn 'Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that he was once in the company of Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) when Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) came in and said "O, Prophet of Allah! you are dearer to me than my father and mother. I try to memorize the Qur'an but cannot do so, as it vanishes from my memory." Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Shall I tell you of a method that will benefit you as well as those to whom it is conveyed by you? You will then be able to retain whatever you learn." At the request of Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "When the night preceding Friday comes, rise up in its last third portion, if possible, for that would be excellent, because this is the best part of the night, as this is the time when angels descend and prayers are specially granted at this hour. It was for this time that Hadhrat Yaqub (Alayhis salaam) had been waiting when he had said to his sons that he would, in the near future, pray to his Lord for forgiveness for them. If it be difficult to get up at that time, then you should do so in the middle part of the night and if even that be not possible, offer the four rak'aat in the early part of the night. After reciting surah Fatihah in each rak'aat, surah Yaaseen should be recited in the first rak'at, surah Dukhaan in the second, surah Alif Laam Meem Sajdah in the third and surah Mulk in the fourth. After completing at-tahiyaat (glorification of Allah in the sitting posture in salat) you should praise and glorify Almighty Allah abundantly, invoke peace and blessings on me and on all the Prophets, and seek forgiveness for all believers and those Muslim brethern who have passed away before you, and then recite the following du'a."

Before the du'a it may be mentioned that several forms of 'hamd-o-thana' (praise and glorification), etc., which are

required to be recited before this du'a are reported in other ahadith given in 'Shurooh-e-Hisn' and 'Munaajaat Maqbul'. Those who can consult these books should themselves find the details and thereby enrich their du'a. For the convenience of those who cannot read these books, brief extracts are given as under:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهٖ وَرِضَا نَفْسِهٖ وَزِنَةَ عَرْشِهٖ وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهٖ ، اَللّٰهُمَّ لَاۤ اُحْصِىْ ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ اَنْتَ كَمَا اَثْنَيْتَ عَلٰى نَفْسِكَ اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِىِّ الْاُمِّىِّ الْهَاشِمِىِّ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهِ الْبَرَرَةِ الْكِرَامِ وَعَلٰى سَائِرِ الْاَنْبِيَاۤءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِيْنَ وَالْمَلٰۤئِكَةِ الْمُقَرَّبِيْنَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْلَنَا وَلِاِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِيْنَ سَبَقُوْنَا بِالْاِيْمَانِ وَلَاتَجْعَلْ فِىْ قُلُوْبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا رَبَّنَا اِنَّكَ رَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِىْ وَلِوَالِدَىَّ وَلِجَمِيْعِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ اِنَّكَ سَمِيْعٌ مُّجِيْبُ الدَّعَوَاتِ

All praise be to Allah, the Lord of Worlds, praise up to the (countless) number of His creatures, matching His pleasure, weighty as the weight of His Throne and expansive as the ink (needed) for the writing of His Words. O, Allah! I cannot comprehend the praise due to Thee. Thou art as Thou praisest Thyself. O, Allah! send Thy peace, blessings and prosperity upon our Chief, the Ummi (not taught by any one), the Hashimite Prophet Muhammad and upon all the Prophets and Apostles and upon Thy favourite angels. O, Allah! forgive us and our brethren who preceded us in faith, and place not in our hearts any rancour towards those who believe. O, our Lord! You are Most Compassionate and Most Merciful. O, Master of the Worlds! forgive me and my parents and all believers and Muslims, whether male or female. Verily, Thou art the Hearer and Granter of our supplications.

After this, the following du'a which was taught by Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) to Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho), as mentioned in the above hadith, should be read:

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْحَمْنِىْ بِتَرْكِ الْمَعَاصِىْ اَبَدًا مَّا اَبْقَيْتَنِىْ وَارْحَمْنِىْ اَنْ اَتَكَلَّفَ مَالَا يَعْنِيْنِىْ وَارْزُقْنِىْ حُسْنَ النَّظْرِ فِيْمَا يُرْضِيْكَ عَنِّىْ اَللّٰهُمَّ بَدِيْعَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ

ذَاالْجَلَالِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ وَالْعِزَّةِ الَّتِىْ لَاتُرَامُ ·اَسْئَلُكَ يَااَللّٰهُ يَارَحْمٰنُ بِجَلَالِكَ وَنُوْرِ وَجْهِكَ اَنْ تُلْزِمَ قَلْبِىْ حِفْظَ كِتَابِكَ كَمَا عَلَّمْتَنِىْ وَارْزُقْنِىْ اَنْ اَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّحْوِ الَّذِىْ يُرْضِيْكَ عَنِّىْ اَللّٰهُمَّ بَدِيْعَ السَّمٰوَاتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ذَاالْجَلَالِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ وَالْعِزَّةِ الَّتِىْ لَا تُرَامُ اَسْئَلُكَ يَااَللّٰهُ يَارَحْمٰنُ بِجَلَالِكَ وَنُوْرِ وَجْهِكَ اَنْ تُنَوِّرَ بِكِتَابِكَ بَصَرِىْ وَاَنْ تُطْلِقَ بِهِ لِسَانِىْ وَاَنْ تُفَرِّجَ بِهِ عَنْ قَلْبِىْ وَاَنْ تَشْرَحَ بِهِ صَدْرِىْ وَاَنْ تَغْسِلَ بِهِ بَدَنِىْ فَاِنَّهُ لَا يُعِيْنُنِىْ عَلَى الْحَقِّ غَيْرُكَ وَلَا يُؤْتِيْهِ اِلَّا اَنْتَ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ الْعَلِىِّ الْعَظِيْمِ

'O, Allah! have mercy upon me, so that I always abstain from sinful deeds as long as I am alive, be kind to me so that I do not toil in vain pursuits, and bless me with solace in that which pleases Thee. O, Allah! the Originator of Heavens and Earth, Master of Glory and Honour, Lord of such Majesty, attainment of which cannot even be conceived. O, Allah! the Most Beneficent, I pray in the name of Thy Majesty and Effulgence of Thy Countenance, to impose upon by heart the memorizing of Thy Book, as Thou hast taught me the same, and grant me such a manner of recitation as pleases Thee. O, Allah! the Originator of Heavens and Earth, Master of Glory and Honour, Lord of such Majesty, attainment of which cannot even be conceived! O, Allah, the Most Beneficent I pray in the name of Thy Majesty and Effulgence of Thy Countenance, to illumine my vision with the noor of Thy Book, bless my tongue with a flow in its reading, and through its blessing remove heaviness of my heart, open my mind, and wash away (the sins of) my body. Certainly there is none except Thee to support me in the cause of truth, and none except Thee can fulfil this desire of mine. There can be no safeguard (against evil) nor any power (over virtue) except with the help of Allah, the Most High, the Most Great.

Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) further said to Hadhrat Ali (Radhiyallaho anho), "Repeat this act for three, five or seven Fridays. If Allah so wills, your prayer will certainly be granted. I swear by Him Who made me Prophet that acceptance of His prayer will never be missed by any believer."

Ibn 'Abbas (Radhiyallaho anho) reports that hardly had five or seven Fridays passed when Hadhrat 'Ali (Radhiyallaho anho) came to Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) and said, "Previously I used to learn about four ayaat but I was not able to retain them, and now I learn about forty and I can remember them as clearly as if I have the Qur'an open before me. Previously when I heard a hadith and then repeated it I could not retain it, and now I hear ahadith and, when I narrate them to others, I do not miss a single word."

May Almighty Allah bless me and you with memorizing of the Glorious Qur'an and the 'ahadith' by the grace of His Prophet's beneficence.

وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالٰى عَلٰى خَيْرِ خَلْقِهٖ سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَّاٰلِهٖ وَصَحْبِهٖ وَسَلَّمَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَآاَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِيْنَ

O, Almighty Allah! by Thy Mercy, send Thy Peace and blessings on Mohammad (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam), the best of Thy creation and our Chief, and on his Family and on his Companions. Thou art the Most Compassionate of all the Most Merciful ones.

PART 4

COMPLEMENTARY NOTE

The forty ahadith given in the foregoing pages relate to a special subject-matter and as such it has not been possible to maintain brevity. These days, we have become easy-going and it is difficult to bear even slight hardships in the cause of religion. In view of this, I give here another set of forty ahadith, which are very brief and are reported at one place from Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam). The beauty about it is that it embraces all the vital teachings of Islam and is unique in this respect. It is given in 'Kanzul-Ummaal' and ascribed to a group of the earliest scholars of hadith. Of the scholars of later times, Maulana Qutbuddin Muhajir Makki (Rahmatullah alaih) has also mentioned it. Let those having a zeal for Islam commit at least this hadith to memory and earn a bounteous reward for doing so little. This hadith is given below:

عَنْ سَلْمَانَ رَضِىَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ سَأَلْتُ رَسُوْلَ اللهِ ﷺ عَنِ الْاَرْبَعِيْنَ حَدِيْثًا الَّتِىْ
قَالَ مَنْ حَفِظَهَا مِنْ اُمَّتِىْ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ قُلْتُ وَمَا هِىَ يَارَسُوْلَ اللهِ قَالَ:
اَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكُتُبِ وَالنَّبِيِّيْنَ وَالْبَعْثِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ
وَالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ مِنَ اللهِ تَعَالٰى وَاَنْ تَشْهَدَ اَنْ لَّآاِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ وَاَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَّسُوْلُ
اللهِ وَتُقِيْمَ الصَّلٰوةَ بِوُضُوْءٍ سَابِغٍ كَامِلٍ لِوَقْتِهَا وَتُؤْتِىَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَتَصُوْمَ رَمْضَانَ
وَتَحُجَّ الْبَيْتَ اِنْ كَانَ لَكَ مَالٌ وَتُصَلِّىَ اثْنَتَىْ عَشَرَةَ رَكْعَةً فِىْ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ وَالْوِتْرَ
لَاتَتْرُكْهُ فِىْ كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ وَلَاتُشْرِكْ بِاللهِ شَيْئًا وَلَاتَعُقَّ وَالِدَيْكَ وَلَاتَاْكُلْ مَالَ الْيَتِيْمِ
ظُلْمًا وَلَاتَشْرَبِ الْخَمْرَ وَلَاتَزْنِ وَلَاتَحْلِفْ بِاللهِ كَاذِبًا وَلَاتَشْهَدْ شَهَادَةَ زُوْرٍ
وَلَاتَعْمَلْ بِالْهَوٰى وَلَاتَغْتَبْ اَخَاكَ الْمُسْلِمَ وَلَاتَقْذِفِ الْمُحْصَنَةَ وَلَاتَغُلَّ اَخَاكَ
الْمُسْلِمَ وَلَاتَلْعَبْ وَلَاتَلْهَ مَعَ اللَّاهِيْنَ وَلَاتَقُلْ لِلْقَصِيْرِ يَاقَصِيْرُ تُرِيْدُ عَيْبَهُ
وَلَاتَسْخَرْ بِاَحَدٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَلَاتَمْشِ بِالنَّمِيْمَةِ بَيْنَ الْاَخَوَيْنِ وَاشْكُرِ اللهَ تَعَالٰى
عَلٰى نِعْمَتِهِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى الْبَلَاءِ وَالْمُصِيْبَةِ وَلَاتَأْمَنْ مِنْ عِقَابِ اللهِ وَلَاتَقْطَعْ

اَقْرِبَآءَكَ وَصِلْهُمْ وَلَاتَلْعَنْ اَحَدًا مِّنْ خَلْقِ اللهِ وَاَكْثِرْ مِنَ التَّسْبِيْحِ وَالتَّكْبِيْرِ
وَالتَّهْلِيْلِ وَلَاتَدَعْ حُضُوْرَ الْجُمُعَةِ وَالْعِيْدَيْنِ وَاعْلَمْ اَنَّ مَآاَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ
لِيُخْطِئَكَ وَمَا اَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِّيُصِيْبَكَ وَلَاتَدَعْ قِرَاءَةَ الْقُرْآنِ عَلٰى كُلِّ حَالٍ

(رواه الحافظ أبوالقاسم بن عبدالرحمن بن محمد بن إسحاق بن مندة والحافظ أبوالحسن علي بن أبى القاسم بن بابويه الرازى فى الأربعين وابن عساكر والرافعى عن سلمان)

Salman (Radhiyallaho anha) narrates that he had asked Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) about the forty 'ahadith' concerning which he had said that, if anyone from amongst his Ummat memorized them, he would enter Paradise. I asked which ahaadith are they? Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) replied: "You should believe:

(1) In Allah, i.e. in His Person and Attributes; and

(2) The Last Day; and

(3) The Angels; and

(4) The earlier Divine Books; and

(5) All the Prophets; and

(6) The rising after death; and

(7) The destiny, i.e. all that is good or bad is from Allah; and

(8) That you bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, and that Mohammad (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) is His Messenger; and

(9) That at the time of each salaat you make good salaat at its proper time after performing a perfect wudhu; and perfect wudhu is one performed with due regard even to adaab (due respects) and mustahabbaat (plural of mustahab—desirable action). Wudhu should preferably be performed afresh at the time of each salaat, although the previous wudhu subsists, and this is mustahab. To make good salaat means to be mindful of its component parts like fardh, sunnat and mustahab. In another hadith, it is said that during salaat the rows should be straight, i.e. the rows should not be curved and there should be no unoccupied space between them. This is also included in the meaning of establishing salaat.

اِنَّ تَسْوِيَةَ الصُّفُوْفِ مِنْ اِقَامَةِ الصَّلٰوةِ

(10) Pay the Zakaat (obligatory charity on wealth exceeding a prescribed limit) and

(11) Fast during the month of Ramadhan; and

(12) Perform Hajj if you have wealth;

The availability of wealth has particularly been mentioned, because want of wealth is generally made an excuse for non-performance of Hajj. Otherwise it is evident that the other prerequisites that make the Hajj obligatory should also exist.

(13) You should perform the twelve raka'aat sunnat-e-mu'akkadah salaat' every day; (According to other ahadith these twelve raka'aat are detailed as two raka'aat before the two fardh raka'aat of Fajr salaat, four before and two raka'aat after the four fardh raka'aat of Zohr, two after the three fardh raka'aat of Maghrib, and two after the four fardh raka'aat of Ishaa'.).

(14) You should never miss the Witr salaat at night; Witr salaat is waajib (compulsory, but less than fardh and more important than sunnat) and is, therefore, specially emphasized.

(15) You should ascribe no partners unto Allah;

(16) You should not disobey your parents;

(17) You should not devour the property of orphans unjustly; (Unjustly implies that there is no harm in using the belongings of an orphan in a lawful manner, as is the case under certain circumstances.)

(18) You should not drink wine;

(19) You should not commit adultery;

(20) You should not indulge in false oaths;

(21) You should not give false evidence;

(22) You should not yield to your base desires;

(23) You should not backbite on a Muslim brother;

(24) You should not bring a false charge against a chaste woman (or a chaste man);

(25) You should not bear ill-will towards your Muslim brethren;

(26) You should not indulge in useless amusements;

(27) You should not join the idle spectators;

(28) You should not call a short-statured person "O, you short-statured one!" with the intention of finding fault with him; (there is no harm if a person is called by a derogatory nickname which has become associated with him, provided the nickname is used neither as a taunt nor as a term of abuse. But using it as a taunt is not permissible.)

(29) You should not indulge in jokes at the cost of others;

(30) You should not indulge in slanders among Muslims;

(31) You should be ever grateful to Allah for His bounties;

(32) You should be steadfast in suffering and calamity;

(33) You should not be heedless of chastisement by Allah;

(34) You should not sever your ties of kinship with your relatives;

(35) You should discharge your obligations to your relatives;

(36) You should not curse any creature of Allah;

(37) You should remember and glorify Allah by repeating سُبْحَانَ الله (Subhaanallaah), اَلْحَمْدُ لِله (Alhamdulillaah) (all praise is for Allah), لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا الله (Laa ilaaha illallaah) (there is no god but Allah) and اَللهُ اَكْبَر (Allaahu akbar) frequently;

(38) You should not miss the Friday and Eid Salaat

(39) You should believe that whatever good or bad lot befalls you was predestined and could not be avoided, and whatever you have missed, you were ordained to do so; and

(40) You should not give up the recitation of the Qur'an under any circumstances."

Salmaan (Radhiyallaho anho) says that he asked Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam): "What reward would be given to one who memorizes these ahaadith?" Rasulullah (Sallallaho alaihe wasallam) said, "Allah will raise him up in the company of the Prophets and the ulama."

May Almighty Allah, through His sheer Grace, forgive all our sins and include us in the company of His obedient servants by His mercy alone. This is not beyond His generous grace. The readers are humbly requested to remember this sinner in their prayers.

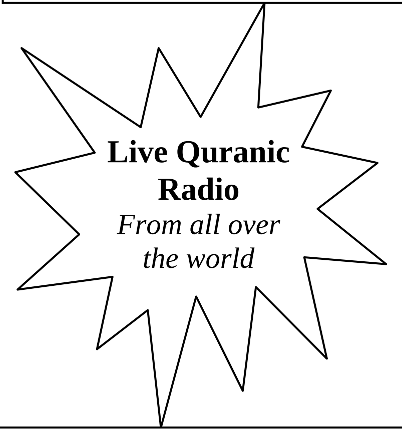
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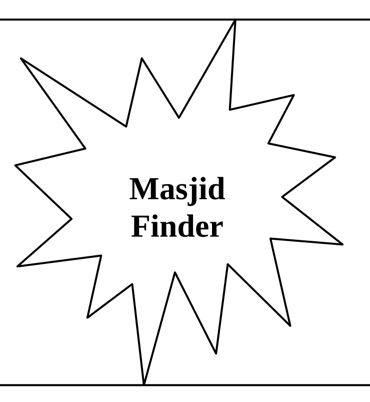
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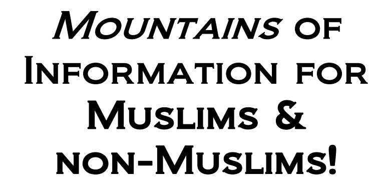
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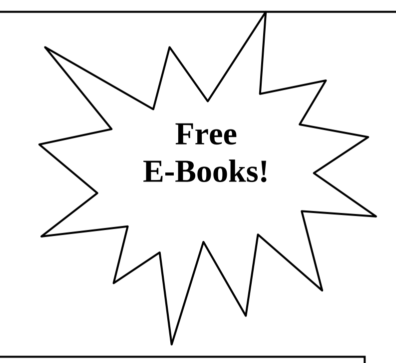
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